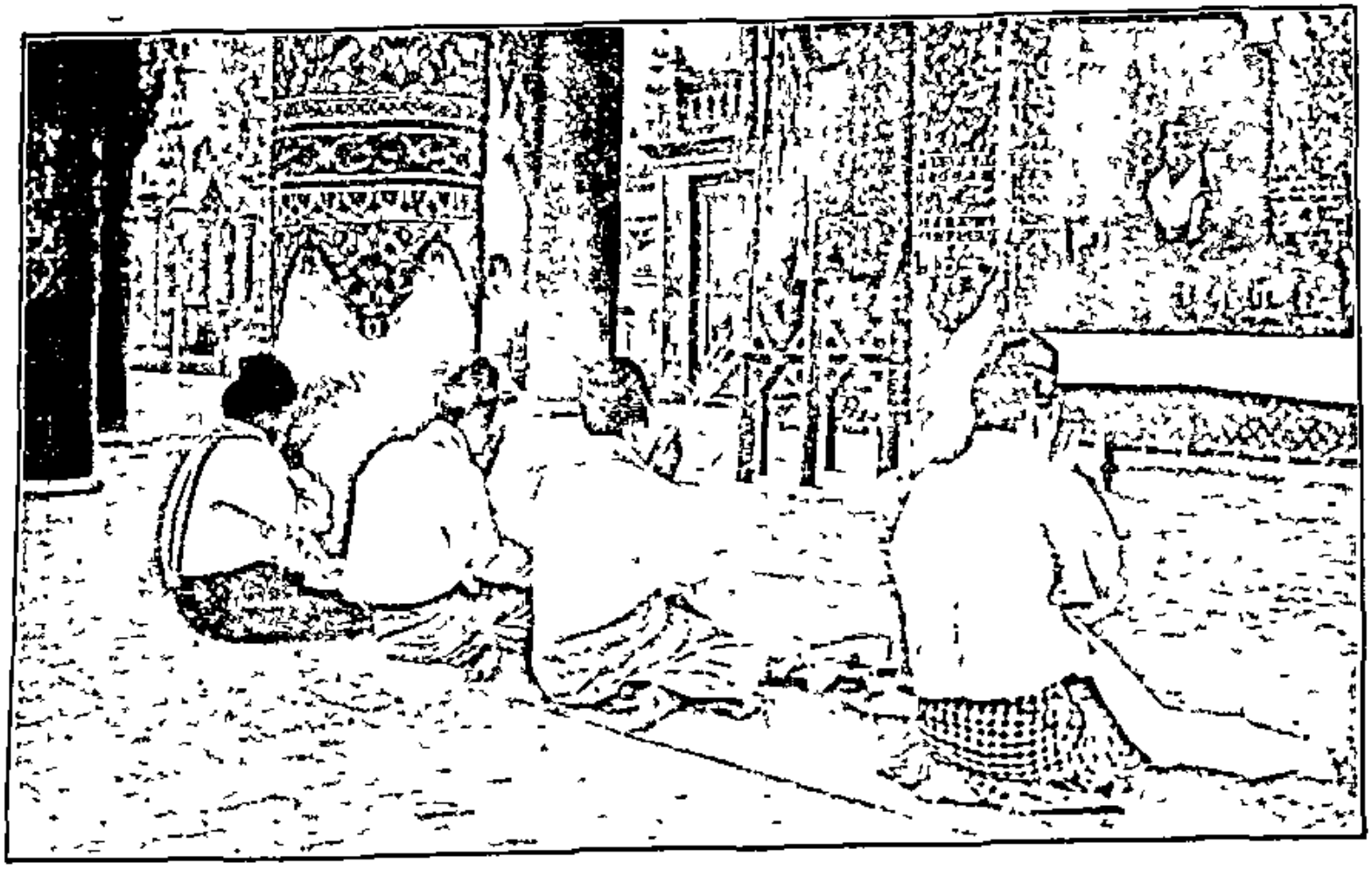


SHWE DAGON PAGODA, RANGOON.
A neik-sa : Dhukka : Anatta.

BURMESE ENCHANTMENT

PRESENTED BY
CHANDABHAI A. MUCHHALA,
BY TO.

CAPTAIN C. M. ENRIQUEZ, F.R.G.S.
21st Punjabis
(THEOPHILUS)

Author of "The Pathan Borderland," "The Realm of the Gods" "Pagan," etc

"The thoughts of his heart, these are the wealth of a man."

—*Burmese Saying*

WITH A MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

CALCUTTA
THACKER, SPINK AND CO
1916

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Dedicated

TO

THE MEMORY OF

MY BELOVED FRIEND

CAPTAIN J. G. L. RANKING,

Indian Political Service, H. B. M.'s Vice-Consul in the Persian Gulf, who lost his life heroically in action at Bushire, on the 12th July, 1915, while returning in the face of hot fire to rescue a fallen comrade. He was a brilliant scholar and linguist, and one of England's very gallant gentlemen.

"O'er many a sea, o'er many a stranger land,
I bring this tribute to thy lonely tomb,
My brother! and beside the narrow room
That holds thy silent ashes weeping stand.

* * * * * * *

Oh, brother, brother, life lost all its bloom,
When thou wert snatched from me with pitiless hand!"

CATULLUS

PREFACE.

It is hardly too much to say that Burma is still an unexplored country. The best of us stand here only upon the very brink of a new and wonderful world. We know just enough about Burma, its philosophy, history, archæology, flora, fauna, and language, to realize the true extent of our ignorance. Behind a quaint expression, or beneath a single word, there may be—and often is—the accumulated experience of centuries. The ideas which a people hold to-day are the inheritance of all their past generations. We ourselves have been brought up to hold views widely differing from those of the Burmese. So we may not easily comprehend the true inwardness that springs from Burmese and Buddhist philosophy. That is why we still stand only upon the brink of a new world—and, let it be noted, the most trivial daily incidents often spring from the deepest sources of the past. Perhaps the reader himself has already fallen under the spell of a Burmese enchantment. If so, he will understand me all the better. The Burmese are a friendly, lovable people, rich in the milk of human kindness, and endowed with rare grace and good taste, both in inward and in outward things.

All that is said here is only an introduction to a subject so vast that, if you became re-incarnate in Burma for twenty lives, you would still be only upon the threshold of greater discoveries. The increasing interest would still lure you irresistably forward to further research. Burma is the store-house of centuries of history. Only the record is faint. It requires knowledge to decipher it—and not knowledge alone, but warm sympathy too. Already many diligent students are at work. Yet, so great is the task, so obscured is it by difficulties, that, after thirty years of occupation, the very existence of tribes in Upper Burma, the name of their language, and even the exact position of some of our frontiers, is unknown. Excursions into almost unexplored fields of religion, letters, history, and geography, reveal treasures, which continually delight the mind and the imagination.

And as we go about our daily work, let us remember steadfastly that modern Burma is only dead Burma re-incarnate. The people of old live again now, and they know it—sometimes. The same beliefs, which comforted them of old, comfort them still.

For reasons we may learn to understand, the Burmese treat with special regard the creatures with whom, in this warm climate, they live on tolerant, intimate terms. It is not necessary that these strange new animals and insects should be given Latin names. We are not inclined to read heavy treatises nowadays. We have learned that interest lies neither in Latin names nor in

classification, but in what our creature friends (and enemies) do: how they live, and what the people think of them, and what traditions and fanciful stories are told about them. Thus may all Burma become enchanted.

The enchantment arises from the little things of daily life. It is woven by scents and sounds and thoughts. Maybe, the sorcerer is only a simple *tucktoo* lizard, watching you stealthily from his place on the wall by the lamp, where he cries *tau-teh, tau-teh* sixteen times running when the rains break. See the photo-frame on my table where a wicked hornet has built a mud fort, and buried inoffensive grubs alive in it. Track the villain down to his hunting ground in the garden, and there watch his cousin sting caterpillars and lay eggs in their poor fat bodies. Beyond the fence spiders have set nets to catch men. Other spiders float past on flying webs, which glisten like gossamer in the sunshine. In the jungle lives a hamadryad. Some extraordinary things are told about him, though it is not required of you to believe a word of it.

On the edge of the forest is an old old Pagoda, overwhelmed by the jungle. It is unapproachable now, and peepal roots are tearing it to bits. The Buddha sits there calmly watching the decay. Men and women no longer heap flowers upon the altar. Candles are no longer lit before the image when evening falls; but instead, the fire-flies consume themselves upon the altar rails.

There are hundreds of white and gold pagodas lining the bluffs of the Irrawaddy. Long white stairways descend to where lions stand in pairs beside the river. They suggest many things to the enquiring mind, and you may perhaps catch therein glimpses of the hidden beauties of Buddhism. Its influence broods over everything, hallows the repose of deserted shrines, steeps the ideas, guides the actions, supplies the motives, pervades the atmosphere, of Burma and the Burmese.

You may travel north, marching for days and days until you reach isolated outposts on the borders of Yünnan, and share with me the lonely life lived in those wild regions. Or you may read a new story of thrilling adventure beside the site of the old Burmese prison of *Let-ma-yoon* at Ava. You may hold in your own hand relics of Buddha in Mandalay, and read the amazing account of their discovery; or you may intrude upon a past age which slumbers still 'neath the shade of tamarinds in Amarapura.

The enchantment of Burma is real—as real as those great pagodas at Pugan which, viewed from the river on a misty morning, only look like dream-palaces. And if by chance it were not all real—surely, it would be a pity to seek disenchantment. "The thoughts of his heart, these are the wealth of a man." The poorest man is infinitely rich whose enchantment is real.

CONTENTS.

Chapter.		Page.
1.	By the Mya Zalon Pagoda	1
2.	Drops of Water	28
3.	Lu-zo	41
4.	About Burmese Pagodas	50
5.	About Buddhism	67
6.	Oil on the Waters	79
7.	Pakokku	86
8.	Po Sein	105
9.	About Hamadryads, and some other matters	113
10.	The North-Eastern Frontier, Myitkyina ..	123
11.	Htawgaw	141
12.	Out-Posts	157
13.	War in the Out-Posts	180
14.	Hpimaw, and the Feng Shui Ling Pass ..	189
15.	Real Burma again	204
16.	Capitals of the Alaungpra Dynasty ..	221
17.	The Let-ma-yoon Prison at Ava ..	251
18.	The History of the Relics of the Exalted One	267
19.	Kyaukse	293
20.	Burmese Enchantment	300

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Facing Page.

SHWE DAGON PAGODA, RANGOON.
A neik-sa : Dhukka : Anatta *Frontispiece.*

THE IRRAWADDY 10

TAMARIND TREES. *Approach to the Mya Zalon Pagoda* 10

THE ORDINATION OF A NOVICE. *Shin-pyu Mingala Pwe* 11

THE MOAT AT MANDALAY 11

MAUNG DWE—A BURMAN OF AVA .. 20

MAUNG BA—A BURMAN OF SAGAING .. 20

Nats IN THE SHWE DAGON PAGODA, RANGOON .. 55

THE THATBYIN-NYU PAGODA (The Omniscient), PUGAN 87

THE DHAMMA YAN-GYI PAGODA, PUGAN .. 87

A HAMADRYAD 112

A *Laubang*—THE CHIEF OF A MULE TRAIN .. 132

CHINESE MULETEERS 132

CHAU SHEH CHWEN AND THE CRATE OF A CHINESE SADDLE 135

LING AND CHAU SHEH CHWEN 135

MAUNG PO MYIT—A BURMAN FROM PAKOKKU 142

A BURMAN FROM MAGWE 142

KACHINS—WILD AND TAME 145

Facing Page.

DISTRESSING EFFECT OF CHOPIN'S "FUNERAL MARCH" UPON LASHI VILLAGERS .. 172
TAMBU GAM, AND A MARU GRAVE AT PALA VILLAGE 172
YAWYINS 173
NORTH-EAST AND NORTH-WEST FRONTIERS .. 175
THE HTAWGAW—HPIMAW ROAD 189
HEAD-WATERS OF THE CHIPWI RIVER .. 189
COFFIN-WOOD BEING CARRIED OVER FENG SHUI LING PASS INTO CHINA 200
NEAR HPIMAW, *en route* TO THE FENG SHUI LING PASS 200
A *Phoongyi*, OR BURMESE, BUDDHIST MONK .. 206
A DOOR IN THIBAW'S PALACE AT MANDALAY .. 206
A BUDDHA IMAGE FROM PESHAWUR FROM WHICH SCHOOL OF SCULPTURE ALL BUDDHA IMAGES ARE DERIVED 281
THE BUDDHA RELICS. (Crystal reliquary: seal: and casket) 281
THE NAGA-YON PAGODA AT KYAUKSE .. 299
THE DAT-DAW PAGODA ON MANDALAY HILL, WHERE THE BUDDHA RELICS WILL BE ENSHRINED 299
MAP OF BURMA.

PRESENTED BY
CHANDABHAI A. MUCHHALA
TO.

A BURMESE ENCHANTMENT.

CHAPTER I.

By the Mya Zalon Pagoda.

There are few pagodas more beautiful than the Mya Zalon at Magwe. Few rise more majestically above the Irrawaddy. It is one of my favourite pagodas, not on account of its beauty alone, but also because of its associations. It dominates in my mind early, vivid impressions of Burma. As time goes on, one rectifies the errors of early opinions; but first impressions are things to treasure up. They influence, favourably or otherwise, all that follows. Oh! that we could live always in the dreamland of first impressions.

Familiarity deadens the senses. Never again can the chime of wind-swept bells, the fresh smell of the Irrawaddy, the visions on pagoda steps weave such fairy spells, as they did in the first few months.

And yet intimacy brings its treasures too. It unveils the hidden beauties of the people's mind, reveals the superb grandeur of Buddhist philosophy, which broods over the land, unseen by uninitiated eyes.

Magwe is a typical little Burmese riverside town. It remains the old Burma, because it is far away from railways. Mail boats call three or four times a week. Otherwise the old Burmese atmosphere is undisturbed.

I landed there from the steamer one sweltering day in May, 1913. A rickety old carriage, first cousin, without doubt, to the Canadian Prairie *rig*, met me. I drove along through avenues of splendid tamarind trees. Next to the good old oaks and elms of our own land, and next to the shaded chenars of Kashmir, the tamarind ranks highest amongst trees. Its wrinkled trunk, and the tracery of its shadows on the ground, will always be associated in my mind with Burma. There was, however, little romance about the road we followed. The ruts lay deep along it. Now they were full of dust. Later they became seas of mud. It remained unmetalled because, except for fossilized tree trunks, there is no stone in the neighbourhood. As a road, it was typical of Upper Burma. Out in the country it spread itself into a dozen paths which crossed and intermingled. Generations of carts had cut deeply into the hard soil. Here and there culverts and bridges stood derelict and isolated, monuments of long departed zeal.

The house I occupied was a wooden, two-storied shell. It stood in a fenced enclosure, called, by courtesy, "the garden." A few desolate shrubs grew here and there, but otherwise the ground lay tormented and baked in the fierce heat of the sun. A hot wind, which

nothing could shut out, tore through the house all day with a mournful wail, until, three weeks later, the Rains broke with a series of magnificent storms. You would never imagine it possible that a Burmese enchantment could be cast in surroundings so depressing as those of Magwe at this blistering season. Yet here and now, the spell began to be woven. A thousand delightful observations relieved the physical misery of life. Innumerable fresh experiences dispelled monotony. People write books I suppose to record fleeting impressions so that later on, when they grow old, when the world is no longer so fresh and amusing, they may still turn back their own pages, and revive memories which they have caught, arranged, and set down there. At least, that is what I have felt about it myself. Having fallen under a Burmese enchantment, I want to perpetuate the influence of it. I wish never to forget how friendly I have found the Burmese, how rich they are in the milk of human kindness, how full of grace and good-taste in in ward as well as in outward things.

As soon as the Rains broke life became supportable. A rich refreshing smell filled the air. Men breathed again and began to tour the district. A sheen of green blades sprung up as if by magic and veiled the naked suffering earth. Day by day it grew and spread, until the brown land was hidden beneath beautiful turf. The trees were washed. The ugly cactus flowered amazingly. The golden spire of the Mya Zalon glittered and shone in the morning sunshine. Insect life woke

to sudden activity; and the lean, hungry *tucktoo*[1] crawled down the wall to where the lamp hung, and sang loudly of good times and good omens for the future. The *tucktoo* lives in all verandahs. He is everybody's friend, ready always with fortunate predictions. My *tucktoo* was a lusty old fellow. He could say "*tau-teh, tau-teh, tau-teh,*" sixteen times running, which was extraordinarily lucky. I have a suspicion that it was *he* who must have cast the spell of this Burmese enchantment. Certainly it was he who first took an interest in me and pitied my loneliness. He offered me his friendship when as yet I had none other. He supervised the furnishing, showed me where the lamps hung with best advantage, and began my instruction in Burmese right off by teaching me his own name—*tau-teh.*

The first thing to attract mild surprise in a Burmese station is the club. It is a small hut, usually built of matting, and always full of bats. Here people meet every evening and talk "shop," in terms which at first are wholly unintelligible. The Commissioner calls himself the *Mingyi*, or 'Great King.' The policeman is called *Yaza-wut-wun-dau*, the 'Minister of Criminals'; while I myself am the *Sit-bo Thekin*, or 'War Chief.' A Burmese club is often a cockpit where people fight violently and pettishly like children. In such cases nice folk keep away. There was, however, none of that nonsense in Magwe. We were just a big family. I

[1] The tucktoo is a lizard.

shall never forget the Commissioner's hospitality when I arrived. His delight was to ride furiously across country in the dawn on his big waler. I often followed on a small Burman pony in the thick of his dust. The hobby of the "Minister of Criminals" was ponies. He bought impossible rakes for next to nothing and proceeded to win big races with them from Rangoon to Mandalay. He was that very rare specimen—a perfect policeman. I have never met another like him before or since. The people feared him respectfully, because he knew them inside out. For that same reason they also loved him.

Magwe is one of the districts famous for Burman ponies—those weird little 12·2 hand animals who can move at an amble all day without giving in. The Burmese are passionately fond of racing. They gamble with amazing recklessness. After the Rains broke, there were racing matches almost every day, which invariably cast up with a dispute in the garden of the "Minister of Criminals." Some one had pulled or jettisoned weights—or worse still, hadn't done either when every one expected him to; and in consequence half the incomes of Magwe were involved for the next six months. There on the lawn, the case was judged, and by some stroke of genius an inextricable knot straightened out to everyone's satisfaction. To say that Burmese racing is foul is to put it very mildly.

In those days I lived in the centre of the race-course. The annual race-meeting was coming on and deep

surprises and conspiracies were hatching. Likely ponies were hidden away in the surrounding villages by day and only brought forth for practice runs after dark. At all hours the silence of night was broken by the encouraging yell of a jockey. There was a click of stop watches, a flicker of electric torches—and then a distant flicker. And if you listened intently you heard other clicks from dark shrubs; for the night was full of eyes. There followed a hushed discussion by Maung Shu—and then silence, until the coast being clear the next lot came down at, say, 2 A.M.

At last the races came round, and with them the bookies, whose darkest member arrived considerably flattened out. He had been sat upon by his comrades (in the most literal sense) all the way up the river. They had also put their drinks down to him; and as he still showed traces of superabundant cheek, they locked him up on board in the bathroom throughout the meeting.

The Burman pony has deteriorated considerably since annexation. No care has been taken about breeding. Scraggy young stallions have always been allowed to run loose in the country. Luckily, the Burman pony has friends and admirers; and at this time there was a bill before Government for his protection. Stud ponies were to be selected and handed over to village Head-men, or to well-known enthusiasts and owners of stallions were to be obliged to have their animals examined and registered.

Race-meetings in Burma are always made the excuse for a "week". It is a week of torture to many. It is preceded by violent quarrels, whose ramifications spread over the rest of the year. For a week, every one is forcibly dragged out to enjoy himself in the fiercest heat of the day. Before breakfast, tempers are taxed to their uttermost limit with badminton at 6 A.M. The unimaginative programme of tennis, cricket, dances, dinners, and "at homes" drags out its weary length. There is no variation in any station. The men, increasingly bored, are only restrained by a heavy official hand from sneaking off to urgent business in the district. The ladies, sublimely unconscious of the surrounding male misery, wear new dresses every day and chatter rubbish. You endure the hot afternoon glare from a matting pavilion and watch sticky chocolates swim away in their own juice. You have met the same score of people morning, noon, and night, and are thoroughly sick of them. You have tried to escape dancing by playing bridge. But dancing men are rare and valuable; and so you dance on and on through the night, in the atmosphere of a Turkish Bath. You squelch in your shoes, your shirt melts, and your collar hangs like a tired boot-lace round your neck. Then your host comes along and says "have another collar"—not "have a medal, old chap" or "have a rest and a drink." Wasn't it a Frenchman who said: "The world would be very pleasant but for its pleasures"?

When it is all over, people go out on tour, to get away from each other, and nurse vermouth livers: and the matting club is left in charge of the *tucktoo* and bats again.

Magwe is in the "dry zone," and so the Rains consist only of mighty storms, usually neatly timed to prevent afternoon tennis. I can hardly describe how refreshing that lashing rain was. Inches of dust were swept away. The country looked newly painted. The storms were very severe, and in the first of them a launch was lost off Minbu. It had a lot of our Military Police rifles on board, which were being brought across to Magwe to be "browned." It gave me an opportunity to go over and see Minbu. The rifles lay in thirty feet of swift water, and long before the Irrawaddy could fall again, would be sunk another twenty feet into the silt. So it did not seem worth while wasting more words and paper than absolutely necessary upon the inquiry; and I went instead to see a group of mud volcanoes, of which the central and largest one stood about forty feet high. It was shaped very much like Fuji. It erupts every eight or ten minutes. Liquid mud overflows the crater and runs down the slopes of the volcano. Kerosine and crude oil are found near by. Minbu stands high on the river bank and is much better situated than Magwe which lies opposite.

* * * * *

With the laying of the dust, I began to enjoy galloping behind the Commissioner a good deal more!

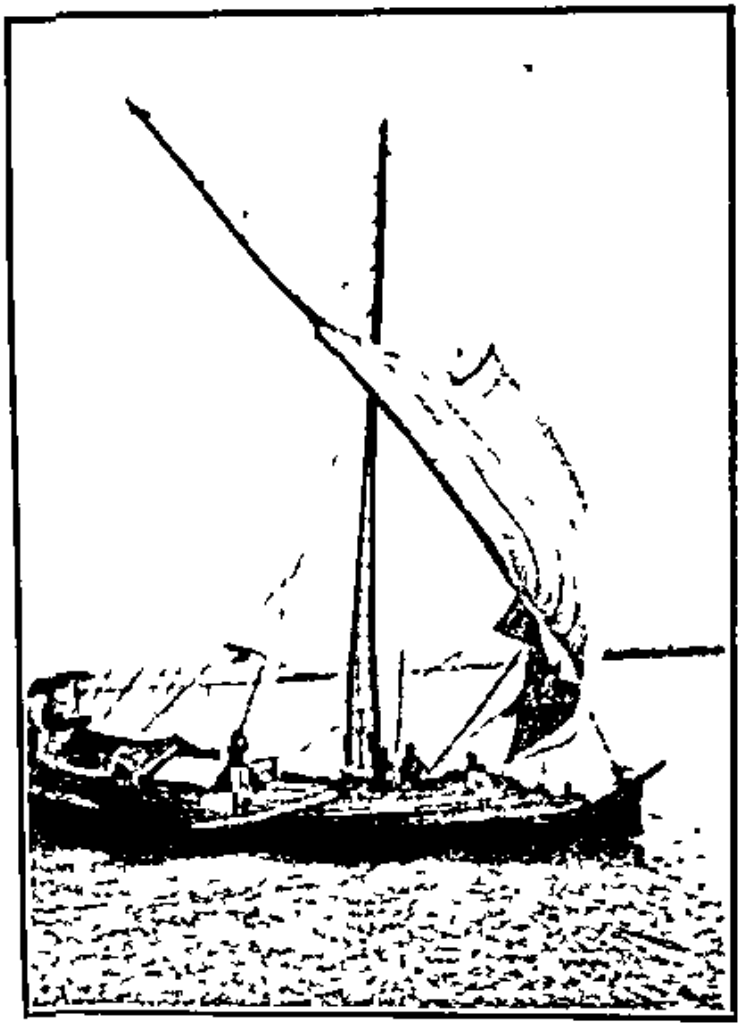
Sometimes we rode out into the scrub, where the bushes were bursting into leaf and the high cactus into flower. Pools of rain water collected, where lotus soon began to bloom. In the clear morning atmosphere the Arakan Yomas stood out blue and distant in the west.

Or we rode to some riverside village like Min-geh, whose quiet monasteries and frayed brick lions lay hidden in palm groves. The singsong Pali lessons of children in the monastery schools would stop abruptly, as they paused to watch us pass. Everywhere men climbed the toddy palms to collect juice which had dripped overnight into pots. They gashed open the fruit afresh, put out new pots to catch the drip, slung the full ones behind them, and descended. They carried a long, light ladder from tree to tree, which they bound loosely to the trunk at intervals as they climbed. It reached up to another ladder, which hung down permanently about one-third way from the top. Occasionally these toddy palm climbers fall from a terrible height.

The seeds of the peepul tree often take root in the stems of toddy palms, where they are dropped by wind or birds. That is the beginning of a deadly struggle between the two, which one sees in progress all over the country. Eventually the peepul throws down roots to the ground and slowly strangles and envelops its rival. In the last stage of the contest nothing at all is visible of the palm, except its feathery head, high up in the foliage of the peepul.

Or we would ride round by the Mya Zalon, resting awhile on the pagoda platform, high above the Irrawaddy. It was always fresh and cool up there. The morning breeze set all the bells chiming on the spire. Men and women knelt murmuring before the Buddhas or placed their offerings of flowers upon the altars. Below us, country boats with white sails out-spread passed up and down the river. A man sat at the helm in the stern in a great carved chair. Above him rose a maze of cordage and rigging. Perhaps one of the mail boats would be calling, in which case the bank below us would be crowded with people, all in their best silks—for the Burmese always dress up fine to travel by boat or train. Opposite lay the white pagodas of Minbu across the Irrawaddy. Regretfully we would turn away and ride again, ending up for breakfast or mango-fool in the Commissioner's garden.

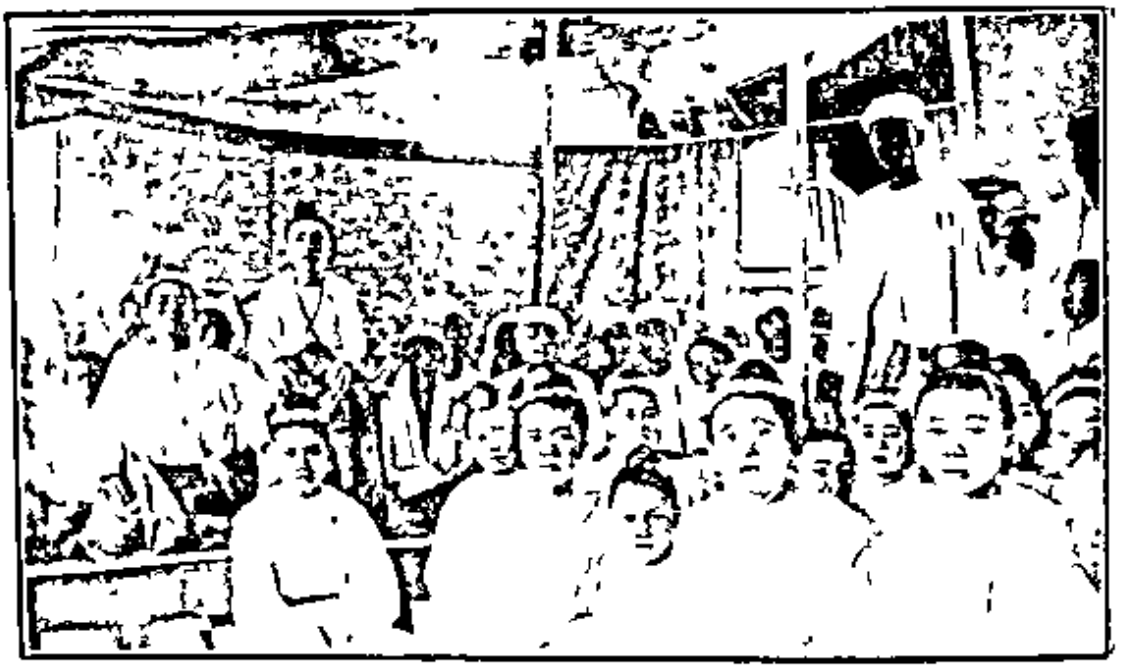
We had now entered upon the period of festivals which precedes the four months of the Buddhist Lent. There were frequent fêtes at the Mya Zalon when all Magwe crowded up to the pagoda. These were very charming gatherings. The people passed the day picnicking, making offerings, and enjoying the holiday. They rested in the *zyats*, or rest-houses, of the Pagoda, or under the spreading tamarinds which shaded the long brick approach. Booths and stalls were set up; and in quiet places a few *phoongyis*, or monks, read and explained passages of scripture.



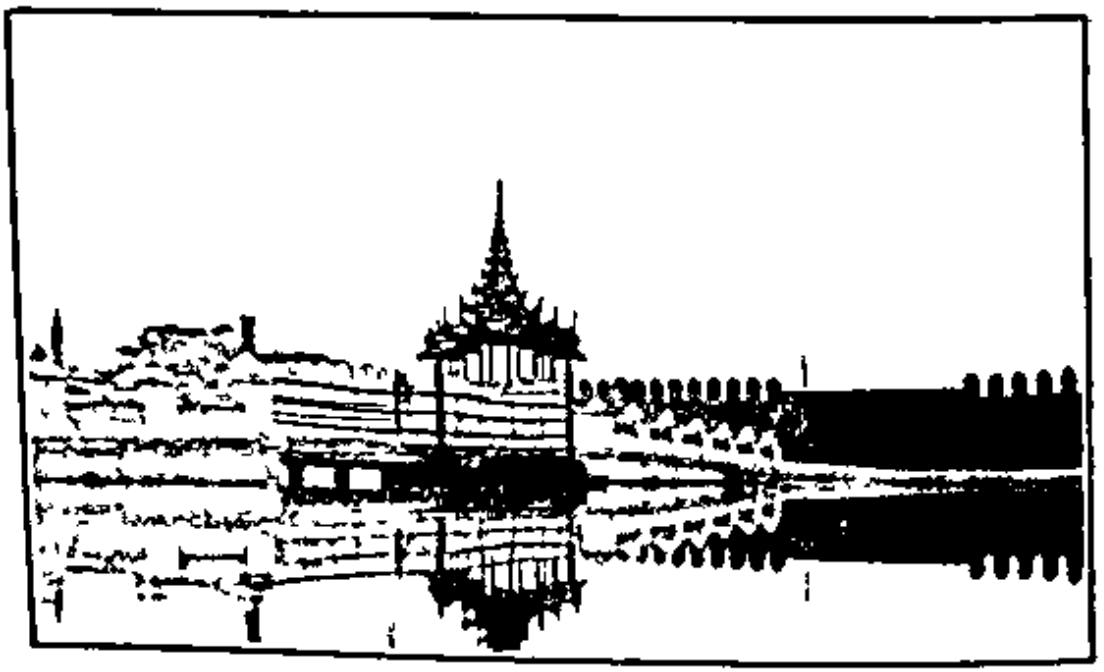
THE IRRAWADDY.



TAMARIND TREES.
Approach to the Mya Zalon Pagoda.



THE ORDINATION OF A NOVICE.
Shin-pyu Mingala Pwe.



THE MOAT AT MANDALAY.

At this time one of my servants, or *luglays*[1], called Maung Mya, gave an entertainment, or *pwe*[2], which I thought wonderfully dainty and attractive for such a poor house as his. The occasion was the ordination of his small brother, who took the "yellow robe," and became a novice, or *Ko-yin*. During the entertainment, which lasted two days, he was called the *Shin-Laung*, or 'Embryo Lord.' The ceremony itself is called the *Shin-pyu minga-la Pwe*, or 'Ceremony of making a novice.' It represents the pleasures which surrounded the Buddha in his palace before his *Renunciation* and *flight* from Kapilavastu. Many of the scenes they acted were very pretty, particularly one representing a river, with a boat full of charming Burmese girls, who were supposed to be rowing the prince to his palace. It was all done just with the help of the neighbours. No one is more skilled than the Burmese in making the very most of a few poor ornaments and jewels. These folk were really very poor, but they chose and wore their silks with perfect taste. Their cheap little jewels flashed brightly. The women bound chains of jasmine round their dark coils of hair. And they laughed and were very happy. Next morning the *Shin-Laung*, led by the groom *Maung Zan*, and riding the white horse *Hkantee-ka*, in imitation of the Buddha's historical *flight*, rode in splendour all round the town like a

[1] Burmese servants are called *lu-kale—lit.* little man, *i.e.*, 'Boy.'

[2] A *pwe* is a play, or festival.

king. Then he made his renunciation. His long hair was all cut off. His gay clothes and jewels were exchanged for the "yellow robe"; and he left home to live the "homeless life" in the monastery, to beg his food every morning from house to house. I think he realized the seriousness of the step he was taking, for there were tears in his eyes when his mother came away and left him.

* * * * *

The Burmese, young and old, are all children. Like children they are impetuous, passionate, and lovable. Sometimes too, they are naughty. They live just for the moment, without thought or provision for the future. They like to have money, but only because it will buy things, and enable them to give presents, and "earn merit." They do not want it to save. They spend it as soon as they get it. Only yesterday I gave Ma Pwa a present of fifteen rupees, because the rain had failed and rice is selling at famine prices. Ma Pwa is the wife of my *luglay*[1], Maung Po Myit. They are almost faced with starvation. It does not worry them in the very least. They have enough for to-day. But there is nothing for to-morrow and the fifteen rupees is gone already. Ma Pwa spent more than half on a silk *loongyi*, or skirt, for her husband. She also expended a little on Swedish matches for me, since I cannot get my pipe alight with the *Chinthay*[2] brand matches,

[1] Servant. [2] Lion.

which are made in Mandalay. With the balance she gave a feast last night to her friends, to celebrate a presentation of cigars, bananas, an enamel spittoon, and other useless things, which she is making to the long-suffering monks in the monastery. This is an act calculated to "earn merit"—and she will be careful to share the merit with me. I have already said my "*thadu*."[1]. It was a charming little feast. The presents were decorated with candles and flowers. But I have every right to be seriously annoyed at this frittering away of money intended for the purchase of solid food. The matches certainly are useful. But Maung Po Myit could quite well do without a new bit of silk, especially in famine time. And the monks could do without the spittoon and bananas, for they have too many of both already. "And what will you do about food for to-morrow?" I asked Ma Pwa, after suitable admonition. "Oh," she replied, "it is not as bad as all that. And if it was, we could get berries and things in the jungle."

Charity is a passion with the Burmese. They love to give presents, or as they call it "to earn merit." Rich people build pagodas and schools and rest-houses. Poor people give fruit and cigars or keep a jar of cool drinking water by the roadside for the use of thirsty travellers. There was once an Englishman who left Burma for good. He dismissed his servants, and they

[1] "It is well." That is, "I accept a share in the merit."

had nothing more to get out of him. When he had been two days out at sea he happened to unpack his cabin trunk, and found hidden in it a silver cup. It was a present from the servants he had left behind. I think he felt a big lump in his throat, as he sat on his bunk with the valuable cup in his hand. It was so extravagant of those poor Burmese servants, so kind, so lovingly arranged. Old servants have left me in India. I am sure we parted with real regret—yet the tears squeezed up for the occasion were crocodile tears, I know. But in Burma the tears are real—so genuine indeed that Maung Mya, when once he left me temporarily, blew his nose in my Liberty curtains—which he never would have done except under deep emotion.

The incident of the silver cup illustrates another pleasing Burmese trait—his disregard for power and favour. When he loves it is with his heart only. There was nothing further to be gained from that master. The presentation was an act of pure, simple affection and generosity. It is well known that a Burman is more at ease with non-officials than with officials. Officials, who sincerely wish to gain the people's affection, complain that they are repelled. Indeed, they are classed in a proverb along with robbers, storms, fire, and water as the "five great evils".

The Burman is not a time-server. Pensions cannot lure him into sacrificing the best years of his life in any service. He prefers poverty and freedom. Nature

has provided him with a warm climate and cheap food. Somehow, he always manages to get cigars and silk, and these are all his needs for the moment. It may seem prodigal to live thus from day to day. But the fact remains that, though there is no great wealth in Burma, there is also little abject poverty. In poverty the Burmese may safely rely on the charity of others until the hard times are passed. We may well envy them their freedom. I have often watched little boys riding out from the villages on buffaloes to the grazing grounds, and thought how much more free and contented they are than I am. From my childhood I have been disciplined. Even now, I cannot move without a Gazette publication or act without reference to "your memo number so and so." We do not know what freedom is. We believe that money buys independence, not realising that true freedom is independence of money. When I am re-born I shall strive to be Burmese.

Unlike some orientals, the Burmese are proud of their race. They are not always aping other people. They do not explain their quaint beliefs with a deprecating air. They do not mind much what other people think about them. They know that people, who have not been trained as Buddhists, cannot understand things. They know that for this very reason foreign opinion is not worth much. It does not search the inner spiritual life of the Burmese. It is a foreign opinion, reasoned from a foreign point of view, and ignorant of beliefs and theories for which, indeed, there is often

not even a foreign word to explain them. There are people who say that, though the Burmese are very charming, they are also lazy and useless. This, however, is not the opinion of men who know them well. Burmese laziness has become a sort of legend. But it is not because of indolence that they allow natives of India to monopolize all manner of service. It is because they are too proud to do that kind of work which compromises their independence. They leave the postal, telegraph, and railway services wholly to the Indian, who is better equipped with the talent for Babuism. They are attracted to administrative posts under Government, not on account of the pay which is small, but for the *aw-za*, or dignity. The word "coolie" with the Burmese is as much a term of contempt as it is with us. But they toil mighty hard at their own industries, as any one knows who has lived in rural parts of Upper Burma. They are primarily an agricultural nation. In less than thirty years they have increased the cultivated area of Burma fourfold, at immense labour. They supply 60 or 70 per cent. of the total rice exported to Europe.

Certain kinds of work trouble them. They quickly weary of it. But they are capable of sustained effort in the support of all their own old Buddhist institutions, which they rightly consider of greater importance than most of the substitutes offered them by so-called reformers. Long before people began to reform the Burmese, they had primary education, more universal

probably, than any in the world. Every Burmese boy, and many girls were taught to read and write. Every village had its monastic school. Every lad was grounded in religion during a period of novice-hood. The often criticised and ridiculed monks have done more for Burma than can ever be acknowledged. Yet with all their immense influence over the minds of the people they have seldom abused their power. They have devoted themselves exclusively to religion, and never as a class interfered with political or worldly matters. Unlike other priests, they have never incited the people to discontent, but have preached consistently the Law of love and charity, of sorrow and transciency. They have taught Burma that charity is the first duty. There is, as I have said, no such thing as destitution in all the land of the Irrawaddy.

It is a teaching of the Buddha that men should not be too readily pleased or troubled. The observing of this rule has made the Burmese placid and even-tempered. They do not let sorrow deject them unduly. But this normal calm is sometimes very suddenly disturbed by a flash of anger, so passionate that a man commits deeds in that moment which he regrets ever after. Some one has said that if all *dhars*, or swords, were kept in sheaths there would be no murder in Burma; for the passion would have died down in the time it takes to draw.

Open manliness and good manners (which signify good breeding) are those characteristics of the Burmese

which have made the strongest appeal to Englishmen, who also love those qualities. The Burman is more straight than other orientals. He frankly likes a well-bred Englishman. Companionship is therefore easy and free from restraint. There are no barriers of caste, cooking-pots, and high class dirt, to be surmounted, as there are in India. Indians say we hold them at arm's length. It is not so. It is they who repel us, exclude us, shut us out from their inner life. But there is nothing unfathomable about the Burman. He is broadminded and very tolerant. He likes novelty. He is glad to be intimate if his affection has been won. But how is he to be so won? I do not really know, for I have not penetrated his inner life very far myself. Not nearly as far as I could wish. All I know is that he is not won on official ground, or by talk of "crops." Some people believe him most easily approached through his women. Undoubtedly that is one way, for there is no better means of learning Burmese fluently; and after all, sympathy and understanding are confined strictly within the narrow limits of the languages we speak. India itself would stand less aloof to-day had such intimacies remained in fashion. The system has its *pros* and *cons*, as everybody knows, in Burma. The value of insight and sympathy thus gained is apt to be discounted by the evils of back-door influence, which will always exist, however carefully guarded against. It is a choice of evils. East is East and West is West, and

that is true whether it is misquoted or not. The more we insist upon Western modes, the further we must drift apart from the East. Correspondence in the press about Western men and Eastern morals has shown how widely the view is held. It is for our moralists and our imperialists to settle between them whether intimacy or cold isolation is best suited to the needs of our Eastern Empire. There is no middle course. In Burma, Burmese and British are very near. In India they are ever drifting further apart.

Personally, I think the surest way to the Burmese heart is through his pagodas and by the cultivation in oneself of a sympathetic interest in his history and his monuments—an attitude in Englishmen which the Burmese call *Myan-ma seik win dey*. It is said that the Archæological Department has done more than any other to win the loyalty of the Burmese nation to the British Government. By repairing and conserving the old pagodas, it does the work of merit which Burmese kings would have done. Respect for these old monuments implies reverence for the wisdom they commemorate. The Burmese love their pagodas. They like us if we love them too.

* * * * *

The real Burma is the country from, say, Shwebo[1] in the north to Thayetmyo[2] in the south. The

[1] Golden Chief.

[2] Mangoe Town.

districts of Shwebo, Sagaing,[1] Ava, Amarapura, and Mandalay are the cradles of the Burmese race. These people have profoundly influenced Burmese history. Rangoon and Lower Burma are not really Burma at all, but have merely become Burmanized by immigration and intermarriage.

At first sight it would seem that the opening up of Burma would be the destruction of the Burmese race. There is so much free intercourse between Burmese and foreigners, and the children of such alliances are usually lost to Burma. For instance, the children of Chinese invaders always turn out Chinese. I use the word "invaders," because it is precisely by this method of settling down and breeding that China does peacefully invade. It is a method more thorough and more lasting than invasion with big guns. In the case of Burma the process is going forward from two directions—from the hills of Yünnan in the north, and from Canton and the Sea in the south.

The children of Englishmen by Burmese women unfortunately assume an English mode of living. One wishes it were not so. The children of *Kalas*, or Indians, are nondescript. The Portuguese, whose forefathers were stranded here centuries ago, have had Burmese mothers and wives for generations, but still retain their own traditions along with their trousers. Antonio Sebastian is Catholic and will never Burmanize.

[1] Acacia Branch.



MAUNG DWE—A BURMAN OF AVA.



MAUNG BA—A BURMAN OF SAGAING.

Foreigners pour in and will do so in still greater numbers, when, in an evil day, the railway is built to India. These things must profoundly influence the Burmese race. But one must remember that all people, like all languages, are for ever in a state of transition. It is only the feeble who go under. The Burmese are certainly not that. They are imposing themselves and their language on Lower Burma, and upon their Shan and Kachin neighbours, amongst whom they are predominant. The transition may even be beneficial, taken as a whole, because the most extensive influence, especially in Upper Burma, is Chinese. Their offspring, called in Chinese "*Panda*," unlike most mixed races, are a superior breed. They incline strongly to the Chinese side. The girls in time are married only to Chinamen. The boys are Chinese in appearance, language, and sympathy unto many generations of Burmese mothers and grandmothers. This Chino-Burmese race undoubtedly unites the good qualities of both, and may one day change the history of the country.

The Burmese character has developed greatly since it came in contact with the outer world. The people are better off than they were. They travel more. That enlarges their view. But, except plays and scripture, they still read very little. There is no good current literature, and Burmese newspapers seem to live a precarious existence. The people are fond of novelty and are always ready for new ideas. Unfortunately they have not yet learned, as the Japanese

have, to assimulate what they adopt. A Japanese railway, for instance, is borrowed from America, but it has become so essentially Japanese that it might have grown up all along under the Shogunate. But a Burmese Europeanized house is certainly not Burmese. It is also decidedly not English. It is just an abortion; a thing too dreadful and awful to contemplate, with its bright green and yellow paint and its tin imitation of wood carving. The perpetrator ought really to be punished by law. But for some reason—delicacy, I suppose—we are afraid to tell the Burmese how dreadful the thing is. I think we are very wrong not to do so.

In the villages, far away from railroads and steamers, the people are still very much what they were in Burmese times. Events of the outer world hardly touch them. All they know and care about is that they are not oppressed or over-taxed, or too severely squeezed by small parasitic officials, who are the curse of every oriental country which allows them to exact commission at every turn for the duties for which they are already paid. If such oppressors exist—and it is said they do—it is the fault of the people themselves who tolerate them. But whatever petty impositions they still endure, the Burmese have the generosity to admit that they are better off under a British than a Burmese Government, and can now use their wealth, instead of hiding it from their own grasping officials. Some of them would be glad to see the king back at Mandalay, preferring any suffering, inflicted by their own people,

to the loss of national freedom. We British, who are a proud race too, can appreciate that view. But the great majority of Burmese know where real freedom lies, and prefer things as they are. A British Government may not be perfect, but at least they know the extent of its faults. Any other might easily be infinitely worse. In this connection they quote a proverb :— "The first *phoongyi*[1] hit once. The second one hit twice." It refers to a little boy in a monastic school who longed to be rid of his master, who hit him once daily. But when that master died, the next one used to hit him twice.[2] Just so might any other form of Government be doubly more oppressive than the British one.

Though Buddhism prevents the Burmese from being an altogether warlike race, they are manly and hardy. Their hardiness, it is said, even inspires the lies they tell in the witness box. There is a whole literature on *that* subject. But though their history has been full of wars, they do not now seek military or military police employment.

One reason for this is that they only like short terms of service. Another is that they are fully conscious that they look like monkeys in the trousers and slouch hats into which they are jammed. As it happens, the Burmese are exceedingly particular about their personal

[1] A monk.

[2] *Ayin phoongyi ta chyet hkauk. Nauk phoongyi neh chyet hkauk.*

appearance. I feel sure they could be made into useful soldiers, if regulations, particularly dress regulations, were made to conform to their national taste. They have the hot, passionate natures which go to the making of real men—and sometimes of real devils. We shall never forget the fury of their "dacoity," after annexation. It was the passionate expression of a manly nation in arms, held down by the throat, and without leaders to turn to in its agony. These dacoits were then called "outlaws"; but really they were patriots, whom all gentlemen and soldiers admired.

Dacoity still occurs, but now it is only crime. I think, however, much of it might be avoided with more sympathy and less law. The law is very worthy and pompous, but of course we all know it is an ass. Dacoity, with desperate, unforgivable crimes, usually has its origin in some absurdly trifling incident. For instance, a village lad once disarmed a policeman sent to arrest him for some small fault. Then he fled. There was a great chase. What did he know, poor lad, about the law? Perhaps, if caught, he might be hanged. So he was driven by his own ignorance into greater crimes for which, in the end, perhaps he *was* hanged. In the North-West Frontier Province of India, numbers of outlaws are pardoned or else invited on safe conduct to come in and talk it all over. Thus useful citizens are restored to their place, and the country rid of desperate men. Here in Burma, there is not a handy frontier to fly to. The life of a refugee becomes that of

a hunted wild beast. He gets no sympathy. His very existence is a personal affront to the district police, whose fair reputation he ruins along with his own. At that moment a conciliatory hand would be welcomed. But since it is not offered, since the law must go on being an ass, desperation drives him to yet more desperate deeds. Yet we should not judge by those last blood-stained deeds alone, but by the first trifling incidents too, which set that miserable man falling from where he lay in the sun, till he "sank in the mire of the tarn." There is a verse of Kipling's which just expresses what I mean :

"By the hoof of the wild goat up-tossed
From the cliff where he lay in the sun,
Fell the stone
To the tarn where the daylight is lost;
So he fell from the light of the sun
And alone.

Oh, Thou who has builded the world!
Oh, Thou who has lighted the sun!
Oh, Thou who has darkened the tarn!
Judge Thou
The sin of the stone that was hurled
By the goat from the light of the sun,
As he sinks in the mire of the tarn,
Even now—Even now—Even now!"

In writing thus sympathetically about the Burmese, I do not claim to any special insight. These views are simply just what I hold myself. But at the same time, though the Burmese have many critics, the bulk of opinion which is worth anything is, I believe, flattering

to them. I am not blind to their faults, but on the other hand I do not care to seek them too diligently, for as I see them, the Burmese are very lovable.

THE MYA ZALON PAGODA, (MAGWE).

By the Mya Zalon Pagoda
Standing high above Magwe:
High above the world, as Buddha
Is above humanity:
Here I sit, and watch the river
Irrawaddy, flowing past
Deep and bright, yet ever fleeting,
Like life's joy which cannot last.

Broadly lies a path before us
Noble, eightfold, straight and sure.
Countless millions are upon it,
Yearning for the distant shore.
Karma's fruit they now inherit
Born of seeds which once they cast,
Paying here the price they merit
For the sins of lives gone past.

Banks of cloud, and beams of sunshine
Swiftly passing here and there,
Every thing in flux, and changeful,
Nothing stable anywhere,
Save the Buddha, calm, reposeful:
Undisturbed by march of time,
Sweet, serene, and ever helpful,
Pointing out that path divine.

Bells that tinkle on the spire,
Men who murmur praise and prayers,
Irrawaddy flowing seaward,
These things pass. This fate is theirs—
They must die: and they must sorrow:
There is *nothing* can endure;
Nothing, but the Law of Buddha,
Offers refuge safe and sure.

By the Mya Zalon Pagoda
Thus I ponder questions deep
Of the paths by which men clamber
To the goal on yonder peak.
Finger posts are Cross and Crescent,
Lingam, Refuges, and Flame:
For the *Law* in *all* is present,
And the *Truth* in all the same.

CHAPTER II.

Drops of Water.

The sprinkling of drops of water as a sign of dedication is a ceremony of great antiquity. More than five centuries before the Baptism of John, we read of it in Buddhist history, when the King of Rajagaha poured water over the hands of the Buddha in presenting him with the Bamboo Grove, and when Anatha Pindika dedicated to the Buddha's use the garden of Jetavana.[1] There are many other instances mentioned in the Pali scriptures besides. In Burma to-day formal acts of charity, such as the distribution of gifts at a pagoda, still conclude with the sprinkling of water.[2] As he does so, the giver repeats three times the word *a-hmya* (distribute equally), as a sign that he wishes to share the merit of his good deed with all supernatural beings, and with all his friends then present. His friends reply, saying *thadu* (it is well) three times, to show that they accept their share in the and that they recognise its power to re-unite the future life.

[1] Buddhist Birth Stories, pages 116 and 131.
[2] "Pagan," page 11.

There are two Burmese sayings which refer to this sprinkling of water and to the future re-union that an act of charity tends to bring about. The first is *ku-tho kan jaung, twey ya dey*, which may be translated "Owing to merit we have a meeting." *Ku-tho* means "merit." To understand the idea, you must know that the Buddhist has no individuality. His being is always changing like a flame which burns on continually, but yet changes from moment to moment. At birth, at death, and at any moment of life, the Buddhist is only the sum of the good and evil of his past. But all that past good and evil profoundly influences his present. He *is*, in fact, the fruit of his past deeds. This is the real idea of re-incarnation. The individual is unreal, because he is always undergoing change. Scientists have re-discovered this truth taught of old by the Buddha, and they tell us now that no atom of our bodies will be still existing seven years hence. But since we are *now the manifestation of past causes*, popular imagination accepts the past as belonging to us, and for lack of a better name we call it a "former life."

This law of Cause and Effect is the Law of *Karma*. Because of it, a good man suffers now misery and misfortune, which he appears not to deserve. He is in fact reaping the bitter harvest he sowed in the past. By his present goodness he is acquiring merit now, and storing up no more misery for himself in the future. Conversely, the villain who enjoys prosperity is reaping

a good harvest, but sowing for himself an evil one. Such is the stupendous Law of *Karma*, or Cause and Effect, which, though more ancient than history, was yet unknown in Europe fifty years ago. It is still almost unknown in its relation to ourselves, though the law of Cause and Effect is recognised and demonstrated daily in chemistry, electricity, geology, and all the other sciences. But Buddhism teaches that the law is universal, and applies equally to the lightning flash and to our own selves. Each man's fate is in his own hand, to mould it. None can save him from himself, and there is no forgiveness of his sins. That sounds terrible perhaps. But it is not so really, for there is expiation of sin. The immediate result of sin will be its own penalty, until its influence is exhausted, like the ripple which at length entirely disappears. There is this hope for humanity, that by its own effort, without help, the meanest thing can, if it wishes to, reach the supremest heights of Buddha-hood and pass to the passionless state of *Nirvana*. To this end does Amida, the Buddha of Mercy, watch over the world, waiting until the last little grain of sand reaches the great peace.

The other Burmese proverb which refers to the sprinkling of water is *Nauk Ka Yea Zet*. It means literally "former drops of water"; but signifies in its fullest sense "we meet now on account of water we sprinkled (in charity) in former lives." It voices the Burmese Buddhist belief that acts of charity will

result in our re-union with loved ones after death; and also that our present happy association with them is the reward of past good deeds. It is a pleasing belief. And is it, after all, entirely fanciful? What a deep significance it gives to those common, daily words of dedication *a-hmya*, "I share with you"; and *thadu*, "it is well."

This evening I have smoked my cigarette with Maung Maung. He is an old friend of mine, but I never knew till he mentioned it casually to-day, that he was a *winza*,[1] that is to say, one who retains memories of a former life. The story he told me of himself was this:—

Before he was born, his parents had another son. When that boy was six years old, he was run over by a cart in Rangoon and killed. Maung Maung claims to be that same boy. He was re-born again of his own mother two years later in 1885, seven days after the deposition of King Thibaw.

That first child had been taken on a visit to Mandalay. Mandalay was considerably changed, when Maung Maung went there again, some years later, with his parents. He quickly noticed many alterations, and would ask "Where is the water-pot that used to be here?" His parents remembered that there had been such a stand for water-pots at the foot of Mandalay Hill. It had been set up by some charitable person, and they

[1] *Win*, to enter. *Za*, a substitute.

no earthly reason to doubt that we existed before, any more than that we shall exist hereafter. If the story of an incarnation were witnessed and testified and duly proved in a Court of Law, strangers would not believe in it any the more, or Buddhists any the less. The proof is either evident in our own hearts, or else it is altogether beyond our comprehension. It depends much on our surroundings and on the beliefs in which we have been brought up.

I have known a Burmese woman who remembered her past life as an inmate of the palace at Mandalay. I have known an Indian child who, playing in his garden, said, "Mother, where is the tree which used to grow here?" She replied, "Son, it was cut down years before you were born." I have known a Kachin exceedingly troubled by the re-birth into flesh of his own dead father. These are the things all people believe in the East. By living there, by opening the mind to the influence of Buddhist thought, the idea of re-birth slowly becomes self-evident.

Lafcadio Hearn describes how one night in a park in London, he overheard a girl say "Good Night" to somebody passing by. He did not know who she was, did not even see her face, and he never met her again. But those two words of farewell thrilled him with a nameless sense of pain and pleasure, which haunted him for the rest of his life. "That which makes the charm of a voice cannot be of this life," he writes. "Inherited memory makes familiar even to the

had, in those old days, drunk water from its wooden dipper. They began to remember dreams they had had, after their first boy had died, to the effect that he would come back. So they decided that Maung Maung was indeed a *winza*. They did not seek any further proof. Incidents which would seem odd to us are quite easily accepted in a Buddhist family. We have all lived *before*. We *will all live again*. *There is nothing* strange about re-birth to them. The only interest lay in the recollection Maung Maung had of his former life. Such memories are rare—but much less so in a Buddhist than in a Christian country, because the idea is familiar to all Buddhists and is always before them. People untrained in Buddhist thought are only vaguely aware of the familiarity of certain voices and people and places. There is nothing in their philosophy which can explain the recognition to them. Even amongst Buddhists such recollections of the past rarely outlive childhood. The strangeness of the re-incarnation idea attracts us. Yet we are suspicious of it and demand positive proof of its reality, forgetting that our own religion makes far higher demands upon blind faith. So I asked Maung Maung for proof. I gave him documents to sign, and asked his parents to set down their statements. But they would not do it. What was the use of proving a thing which is beyond proof? In Buddhist lands these ideas are as obvious as the axioms of Euclid. A life is that which has cause and flux and no end. There is

no earthly reason to doubt that we existed before, any more than that we shall exist hereafter. If the story of an incarnation were witnessed and testified and duly proved in a Court of Law, strangers would not believe in it any the more, or Buddhists any the less. The proof is either evident in our own hearts, or else it is altogether beyond our comprehension. It depends much on our surroundings and on the beliefs in which we have been brought up.

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newly-born the meaning of this tone of cares
Inherited, no doubt, likewise, our knowledge of the ton
of sympathy, of grief, of pain—vague dumb pathos
forgotten sorrows. Dim loving impulses of generatio
unremembered. The dead die not utterly. They slee
in the darkest cells of tired hearts and busy brains—
be startled at rarest moments only, by the echo of son
voice that recalls their past."

The enduring strength of friendships is often quit
incomprehensible. A similarity in tastes, opinions, an
characters are not always the essentials of friendshi
There is often no apparent reason for them. W
accept them blindly, realising only that the companio
ship is restful and pleasing, and suggestive of long
association than we can account for. There are fa
friendships made in the first moment of meeting, whic
survive separation and every other discouragemen
There are passing friendships which we feel woul
develop, but for the unhappy fact that *our drops of wat*
are quickly exhausted. Destiny separates us for ever, an
cuts short a pleasant association. There is love
first sight, when men and women unhesitatingly tak
the greatest step in life, and rarely regret it afterwards
They are impelled by a sense of companionship which
certainly not of this world. In Buddhist countri
there is no difficulty in understanding the significance
all these unconscious recognitions. In Burma, man an
wife earn merit at the pagoda, that they may be ma
and wife again "for seven lives to come." In Japan

lovers who for some reason cannot unite here destroy themselves in the hope of a happier re-union hereafter. The idea of re-union is not strange even to Europeans, who look forward to meeting their loved ones again. But that they should already have met previous to this life has never struck them. Nor do they hope to live together hereafter in any sort of earthly relationship. Their immediate future is a Heaven, devoid of human passions. The Buddhist *Nirvana*, too, is of course essentially a passionless state, but few men hope to reach it all at once. They expect rather to climb according as their strength permits by steeper or by easier paths to the sunlit snows, living many more lives before they reach the end. In the Jatakas, the 550 stories of the Buddha's previous births, the Buddha associated frequently with his friend Ananda and with his wife Yashodara, who was many times his wife in previous lives.

Light-minded people never experience the real sensation of friendship. Their so-called friends are merely acquaintances, whose company is very pleasant, but with whom they are not capable of enjoying deeper intimacy. Real friendship is not content with that. It demands, as its right, utmost devotion and intimacy and—if necessary—sacrifice. We are seldom blessed with more than one or two such friends. To realise this, one has only to examine those we have and decide which of them could be relied on in a crisis to make

any great sacrifice on our account. The value of such a friendship cannot be measured.

Mysteries are none the less real because we grope blindly after them and fail to grasp them. A scientist who blunders accidentally upon some law of electricity does not perhaps understand what he has found, but still he knows it to be true all the same. So too, we blunder into mysteries about ourselves. They are incomprehensible, but personal experience assures us of their reality. Nature leaves nothing to chance, though we seldom recognise that truth. Everything, from the great snowy mountain ranges to the small ants in the plain below, is governed by one law of Cause and Effect. Why then should only our destinies be made the sport of cruel chance? Is there really any such thing as the "chance of birth"? Of course there is not. It is ordained by the law which births shall be high and which low, which refined and which degraded. The great differences that exist in the levels of human intellect necessitates a sense of discrimination on the part of beings about to be born. Experience shows that a mathematical genius is not likely to be born amongst Hottentots. It seems reasonable to suppose that genius searches for, and is attracted by, parents who are suitable. It does not follow that good or clever men are not *ever* born of degraded parents, but such cases are rare, and can be explained by evil *Karma*. It is perfectly reasonable to suppose that children receive fortunate or unfortunate births according to

their merits. It is cruel to believe that it is all a matter of luck. Each one of us, as we grope from life to life through the ages, is drawn instinctively at the time of each birth to those with whom we are in sympathy. There is, I think, a deep significance and comfort in this thought. And conversely, we are repelled by those of a different temperament. Even the atoms behave thus. Just so was Maung Maung attracted again to his own mother. How comforting it must be for a mother to believe that the same beloved little one has returned to her again from the grave.

It is perfectly certain that magnetism such as I have suggested does actually exist between friends in this life too. It is not limited by time or space. There can be communion, especially in a crisis or in sleep; communion which is unconscious, but for all that very real and comforting. Such communion cannot be exerted at will. It must necessarily be unconscious, because it relates only to the subconscious part of us, which is separate from our perishable parts. Subconscious influence is often set in motion by the act of letter writing, because the whole mind and sympathy of the writer is *unconsciously* and intensely directed towards his friend. His friend feels the influence, though he does not know that he is being influenced: and the result is that he also is impelled to write, and so letters cross in the post. This occurrence between intimate friends and between husband and wife is too common to be explained by coincidence.

A broken-hearted mother once asked me if I believed that the dead could come to us and warn us of their passing. "My son was shot down in the war," she said, "and at that moment I felt as if I too had been shot in the heart."

Yes, I do believe, because I too have experienced. Not all the arguments in this world could disapprove to me the reality of that ghostly farewell. In that supremest crisis of all, the hour of death, when every tie and interest is being severed, when the departing spirit cries out for support in its awful extremity, the bonds of love and friendship alone hold fast and pass over the gulf into the beyond. We have endless evidence of it. There is the mother who hears the call of her far-away child, at that moment dying. There is the mother dying in India who passes in a moment of time over thousands of miles to her son in England, so that he feels the anguished caress of her farewell and bursts into tears. He does not know why he weeps. But later on, when in due time a cable arrives and he hears the news of his loss, he takes comfort for all the rest of his life in the memory of that last spiritual visit. It was as much a reality to him as any bodily visit could be. Is it possible that these two—mother and son—whose sympathy was absolute, who flew to each other's support in the hour of their mutual agony, should not be drawn into some sort of companionship hereafter? No. It is certain, even when individuality and all memory of the past are

obliterated, that these two will instinctively recognise one another in lives to come. All the merit they have stored, all the good they have done, was dedicated to this end. All the yearning of their love, sprinkled with tears, is pregnant with power to re-unite. "Owing to their merit they *shall* have a meeting." *Thadu*, it is well.

THE DEAD, WHO DIE NOT UTTERLY.

"*All our knowledge is bequeathed knowledge. The dead have left us record.....*"—Kokoro.

The knowledge of the dead is incarnate
And latent in the new-born infant's mind.
New generations fresh experience make
To add to what the dead have left behind
Our inmost, individual self we owe
To actions, words, and thoughts of long ago.

Likes and dislikes, which seem unreasoned, blind;
Strange contradictions: loathings; yearnings tense
Inherent in the individual mind:—
These qualities are heritage immense,
Bequeathed us from the very dawn of time,
Ourselves ancestors in the ancestral line

Dead generations die not utterly,
But live again in our subconscious mind,
Though we cannot recall the memory
Of countless lives that we have left behind:
Only there still survives in us a sense,
An instinct—born of long experience.

Thus do two lovers love at sight, nor heed
The faultless destiny that joins them now—
The '*drops of water*' sprinkled, that decreed,
Ages ago, their happy union now.
Thus too, new places oft familiar seem
As if we'd visited them in a dream.

A mathematic bent some children show,
Manipulating sums with instinct rare.
Inborn in others music. Yet they know
Not whence, nor how, the melody is there;
Nor why it thrills. Mysteriously it sways
Their souls, as it had done in ancient days.

Our individual self is composite
Of *tendencies*, which move for best or worst.
Beyond the grave, these fractions re-unite
In fresh conjunctions. So is *self* dispersed.
Thus whirls the wheel, according to the Law;
And we move on towards *Nirvana's* shore.

CHAPTER III.

Lu-zo.

Maung Lwen was vicious. Everybody knew it. Ali Bux, the Indian police constable, knew it because Maung Lwen was rude to him. Young Jones, the D. S. P.[1], who was very new and very keen, knew it, because Ali Bux told him so. Aitkin, the S. D. O.[2], who was also young and keen, knew it, partly because every one said so and partly because it pleased him to imagine that he knew everything about everybody in his district. Aitkin and Jones occupied the relative positions of King-Emperor and Prime Minister in remote Minmyo, and were consequently above making mistakes. They were, of course, by no means typical officers. But it just happened that both were young, and the zeal of youth is very often misplaced. So when they discussed Maung Lwen over coffee and port and decided that he would come to a bad end, Maung Lwen's fate was already sealed. The *luglays*[3] heard all about it as they handed cigars, and Ali Bux made a point of hearing all that the *luglays* did.

Thus was the tragedy prepared for Maung Lwen in those comparatively innocent days when his crimes

[1] District Superintendent of Police.
[2] Sub-divisional Officer.
[3] Servants.

consisted of nothing worse than an independent manner and a slight tendency to an occasional flutter at cards or at races. Ninety-nine out of every hundred young Burmans are no better than Maung Lwen. But, you see, there were forces at work which are irresistible—evil fate and *karma* inherited ages ago—which no man may escape.

Certainly Maung Lwen did not realise the direction of the current; nor did he suspect the danger he ran in irritating Ali Bux. On the whole, he was a good lad: lazy perhaps, and too fond of pleasure; but there was no real wickedness in him. He and Ma Chyok his pretty wife, and Maung Po Tin their small son, might often be seen of an evening, lighting candles at the pagoda. Little Maung Po Tin played happily with the lights; while Maung Lwen and Ma Chyok knelt together and repeated the old, old formula:—*A-neik-sa, Dok-kha, Anatta;* which by the very frequency of repetition had lost something of its meaning for them—else, surely the thought of trouble and of impermanence would have steadied Maung Lwen's character and helped him to calm the temper which was to be his ruin. But instead of this, he said more rude things to Ali Bux the constable, when he came nosing about for evidence in some case or other. He even called him a something "*Kala*"[1]; and the little Punjabi eyes had blazed

[1] *Kala* means 'foreigner,' and is a term of contempt, often coupled with some uncomplimentary remark.

with malignance. That was step number one; and in such cases Ali Bux took good care that step number two followed swiftly. So Maung Lwen was in handcuffs the very next day, fettered like a wild beast, on his way to the lock-up; and poor little Ma Chyok followed weeping. I don't remember the exact details of the case. It was all very trivial, and Aitkin dismissed it at once. It was something to do with stone-throwing at a *pwe*,[1] but Ali Bux, who had investigated it, had taken care to find strong suspicion against Maung Lwen. Maung Lwen denied it flatly, and angrily rejected a suggestion that ten rupees would make matters easy. In fact, he used language to the constable the nearest English rendering of which is "go to the devil." The little pig eyes, half dazed with opium, had flashed again with fury.

So Maung Lwen had clanked to the lock-up overwhelmed with shame. And Ali Bux himself pulled down his long hair to look for cigars, and stripped him stark naked to see that no weapons or drugs were concealed in unexpected places. Maung Lwen's wrath smouldered, and Aitkin and Jones talked long and earnestly over their cigars that evening.

That was the first of many similar episodes. Most of the cases were thrown out, and Maung Lwen released. But little by little his name became associated with crime. First it was mentioned in connection with

[1] A play.

a gambling quarrel. Then, again, with more stone-throwing at a *pwe*. Later more serious crimes were quite unjustly put down to his account, and last of all the ominous name of *lu-zo*[1] was coupled with his, by the insinuations of the constable, and he was bound over for good behaviour. Maung Lwen's resentment flamed high against it all. Ali Bux should have trembled in those early days at the wrath of an angry Burman, which he was so deliberately and systematically fanning.

But what had he to fear? Had he not the resources of a mighty Empire behind him, with all the intricate machinery of the criminal code at his finger's ends? Did not young Jones innocently swallow any story Ali Bux chose to tell him; and was not Ali Bux expert in the art of telling stories from which Jones could tickle his vanity by reading deductions? Had not Maung Lwen often called him a something "*Kala*," and was it not refined revenge to pull down his hair, and strip him naked before a crowd in the "cage"? He knew Maung Lwen resented that more than anything, and so he delighted in making a thorough search till Jones, who looked upon all offenders as an insult to his authority, one day praised him for his zeal.

An evil day it was for both of them when Maung Lwen and Ali Bux began their feud. An evil day it was when Maung Lwen, just released for the fifth time

[1] *Lu-zo* means a bad character.

in two years from the lock-up, met Ali Bux under the big village tamarind tree, as he was returning home. Maung Lwen rushed at him furious and maddened. It was lucky for the constable that his victim had no weapon then, or surely he would have killed him. As it was, Maung Lwen only beat him—beat him till he screamed with fear and his nose bled freely. Then Maung Lwen slipped through a cactus hedge and fled home.

Such an affair as this could not be let pass. Nor was Ali Bux the kind of man to endure silently. With instinctive presence of mind, he applied his pugaree and shirt to his nose, making the best possible display of the available blood; and so presented himself to Jones, the injured victim of the *lu-zo* Maung Lwen, who, besides trying to kill him, had robbed him of twenty rupees. If Jones's own nose had been flattened instead of his constable's, he could scarcely have been more indignant.

Then there went forth an armed escort which was to arrest the villain Maung Lwen in His Britannic Majesty's name for beating one of His Britannic Majesty's honest servants. But Maung Lwen got wind of it in time and slipped out into the darkness. He stayed away two nights, spending the miserable hours of daylight in the scrub jungle. The third night he returned home and was nearly caught by a patrol. Then followed weeks of sneaking about, and of surreptitious meals brought out to him by poor little

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Ma Chyok. What was to be done? This harassing life could not be endured for ever. If he were caught, there would be the clanking walk to the cage all over again in front of the whole village, the hateful stripping, the searching, the insults. Then a trial, a remand, a long wait for Sessions, a retrial, and appeal, ruin. Of course matters were not really half so bad as all that. Indeed, by now, Aitkin was not as green as he used to be, two years ago. His honest suspicions had been aroused by Maung Lwen's constant arrest. He had determined to investigate the next charge very searchingly. But what did Maung Lwen know about all that? His inflamed mind saw no solution but the rope and Andamans, the break-up of his home, the ruin and destitution of his wife and son. Wrathfully, with anguish, he looked back to the happy safe days when he had been free to live in his home, and when they had all put on their gayest silks to go and place candles of an evening before the calm gold images in the pagoda. Now, all that was hopelessly gone. Instead, he lived like a hunted jackal round about the village. There was nowhere to fly to, no safe border to take refuge in. Only this hot, miserable jungle to creep about in like a wild beast; and always a relentless, pitiless law thirsting for retribution.

Meals became difficult to get. Money began to run short, and Ma Chyok lost her air of prosperity. Payment for food had to be made. Maung Lwen began petty thefts to meet these pressing needs. As

his evil reputation increased, food was sold him at an ever-increasingly high rate. His name appeared in *Gazettes*. One or two outcasts like himself joined him. Small successes encouraged bigger enterprises. Jewels were easy enough to get, and cattle easy enough to lift. But even now, Maung Lwen was driven to crime rather by necessity than by choice. He would willingly have thrown up his wild life and returned home, had return been possible.

And why, indeed, was return not possible? Must the law be relentlessly applied, when clemency would save a soul from ruin and restore a good citizen to his old place? In other countries outlaws, *and even murderers*, are redeemed thus, and seldom give trouble again. A pardon then, or even an invitation from Aitkin to come in without fear of arrest and discuss matters, would have saved him. And he was worth saving. Would not you and I have reached the same state, if relentlessly driven as he had been?

But no one thought of redeeming Maung Lwen. On the contrary, Jones's indignation was unlimited. He regarded the existence of Maung Lwen in his district as a *personal* affront. Patrols scoured the country. Jones sat up night after night in the dark and rain. The villagers were frightened into refusing Maung Lwen food and shelter at any price. So Maung Lwen grew desperate. Escape from this miserable life seemed impossible, and the toils of fate closed round him. As he sat outside his own house one dark night, he

thought bitterly of it all, and traced back these wretched events step by step through the last three years. Ali Bux stood on every step, at every corner; and right at the end of the vista, he saw himself standing up refusing to pay trifling blackmail and telling Ali Bux to go to the devil. Ten rupees!! He would give ten-thousand now to have that day again. A fierce resentment blazed up in his breast. He was utterly desperate and miserable. He rose up and walked boldly into the village. It was too dark for any one to recognise him. A few people were chanting at the pagoda. A fitful light of candles illuminated the calm face of the Buddha. A soft breeze played over the temple bells, setting free their sweet melody. Maung Lwen turned away sick with misery. The police-lines were close in front of him. He knew the way well. He went to Ali Bux's house and pushed his way in.

Ali Bux was lying on his bed, and rose up startled. An exclamation of fear broke from him, when he saw Maung Lwen's face. And, indeed, it was ugly with fury. He began some foolish greeting, but Maung Lwen pinned him to the wall and throttled the words in his throat. Then he spoke to the constable in hot, tense whisper-. It sounded very horrible; and his victim's eyes bulged with terror and he fought for breath as Maung Lwen's finger gripped his windpipe. What Maung Lwen said will never be known, but his furious whisper was broken with sobs and curses. Presently Maung Lwen's last shred of control departed, and he

hacked his wretched victim to pieces with a *dhar* and left him dead. There had been no noise. Maung Lwen stepped out, closed the door, and went home.

He did not try to escape. He simply went home to his wife and his son, and stayed with them till he was arrested. He is now awaiting Sessions.

If you were the Judge, what would you give him?

CHAPTER IV.

About Burmese Pagodas.

"When the shrines through the foliage are gleaming half shown—"

Lalla Rookh.

The smallest well known pagoda in Burma is probabl the Let Saung Po, which stands on a boulde overlooking the angry waters of the Irrawaddy in th Second Defile. It lies at the foot of a cliff eigh hundred feet high. The unique situation of thi little red and gold shrine has made it famous.

The largest pagoda is undoubtedly the Mengun though its founder, King Bodaw Paya[1], abandone it after about five years' work in 1795. It had the only reached one-third of its intended height. It stand on the right bank of the Irrawaddy near Mandalay "a geological phenomenon," as Yule calls it. Its vas square base, though shattered and smashed by earth quakes, is still reputed to be the biggest masonry building in the world. It has no architectural beauties to recommend it. Its great relic chambers, whose size is said to be responsible for the collapse of the shrine, are believed to be filled with deposits, valuable

[1] *See* the table of the Alaungpra dynasty in Chapter XVI.

and otherwise, ranging from golden images to a soda water machine.

Near the pagoda is the Mengun bell, which is the largest bell but one in the world, being second only to one of the Kremlin bells in Moscow. It once fell from its bar and lay on the ground for years, but was mounted again upon two iron pillars by the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. According to a *phoongyi*, or monk, who like myself was visiting it, the body of the Mengun bell is fourteen arms length (elbow to finger-tips) high. It is twelve arms length in diameter; and its weight is 555,555 pounds. If that figure fails to convey any meaning to the European mind, we may refer to Phayre, who says the weight of the bell is eighty tons.

The building of these monster pagodas naturally exhausted the country, and was consequently unpopular. Strange rumours got about concerning King Na-ra-thi-ha-pa-the's pagoda, the Mingala Zedi, at Pugan, to the effect that the country would be ruined as soon as the shrine was completed. So it was abandoned. But it was eventually finished in 1274. Within ten years from that date, Pugan was destroyed by the Chinese Army of Kublai Khan. The king himself was nicknamed *Tarok pye Min*, which means "the king who fled from the Chinese."

Similar stories got about concerning the Mongun, which induced Bodaw Paya to stop work. It became a popular saying that the capital city of Amarapura

would fall when the huge Mengun lions on the river edge stooped to drink. They have so stooped. Their vast broken limbs now litter the bank; and Amarapura has fallen too!

King Thado Dhamma Raja celebrated the construction of his capital at Ava by building a famous shrine called the Kaung-mhu-daw (or Good Royal Deed) near Sagaing, in 1636 A.D. It is said that an image of gold, of the same weight as the king, is buried in it. The pagoda is of the *Stupa* or *Dagoba* type, but is also said to have been built to resemble a woman's breast.

Probably everyone in Burma has fixed on some pagoda or other as a favourite. There is a wonderful fascination about these shrines. There is repose in the dim corridors of the Ananda at Pugan, where shafts of light illuminate only the faces of the great Buddhas. The Gawda-palin (the Throne of Buddha), and the That-byin-nyu (the Omniscient), viewed from the Irrawaddy on a misty morning, look like dream palaces floating in the air. In reality they are vast cathedrals dating from the eleventh century. A well-known landmark is my own favourite, the golden Mya Zalon Pagoda on a bluff above Magwe; while for sheer magnificence of situation the pagoda of Kalewa on the Chindwin is unrivalled. It stands on a hilly promontory at the junction of the Chindwin and Myittha rivers, whose broad, glassy waters sweep beneath it. A few miles below it, is a small white shrine at Pe-way,

on a boulder standing, in winter, high above water. But in the Rains when the Chindwin river rises, a fearful whirlpool sets up in this bend. It is about a mile broad. The tumult, when the water gradually rises to the very foot of the pagoda, defies description. Logs swirl madly round and round and occasionally leap perpendicularly to the surface.

The Chaik Htee Yo is another curious pagoda. It stands on a big balancing rock. The legend is that the rock does not really rest on the earth, but floats above it, and that a thread can be passed under it. In ancient times it is said that the Karens tried to pull the pagoda down, because it attracted so many strangers to their country. But while they were shouting over the impious work of demolition, they were all turned into monkeys. The monkeys there still have that peculiar cry of the workmen.

The Burmese pagoda has been derived from the round, hemispherical *stupa* of ancient India, of which the Sanchi Tope is the prototype. In early days there was continual communication with India. The link between the *stupa* of ancient India and the pagoda of modern Burma is to be found in the elongated hemispherical pagodas of Prome, such as the Bodawgyi, which is fourth century. The subsequent development is easy to trace. There followed a "bulbous" type like the Bu Paya[1] of Pugan, in the seventh century. The eleventh

[1] *Bu Paya* means 'dumpy pagoda.'

century produced a fresh advance to what I call the "Squat." This was a pagoda of considerable architectural beauty, like the Mingala Zedi and the celebrated Shwezigon, also both at Pugan. The height of grace was reached in the fifteenth century, when the most beautiful of all shapes, the "bell shape," was produced. The best examples I know are the well-known Shwe Dagon at Rangoon and the Pato-daw-gyi (1818 A.D.) at Amarapura. The process of elongation has since been exaggerated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the modern pagoda, rather like a champagne bottle, lacks the poise and grace of earlier developments. Shan pagodas are especially tall and slim. It is not possible to tell a pagoda's age by its shape. But it *is* possible to say positively that it cannot belong to a period previous to that in which that particular shape was evolved. Thus, even if we did not know the date of the Shwe Dagon, we could still be certain that it was not older than fifteenth century, which was the earliest date at which bell-shaped pagodas of that type were built.

Broadly speaking, there are two main types of pagodas, both originating from India. The first is round, and "bell-shaped." The dome is raised on a number of terraces. This type is called a *Zedi*, as for example the Mingala Zedi (the *Zedi* of Good Omen.) This is the kind whose development has already been traced back through the centuries to the *stupas*, or burial mounds, of ancient India. The *Zedi* is solid right





Nats IN THE SHWE DAGON PAGODA, RANGOON.

far up on the spire, steals the music of other bells, which cannot be heard above the sounds of the city in day time. At this enchanted hour, the richness of colour, the distracting detail of carving, is lost in the gloom. Only a glint of red or blue here and there suggests glass mosaics on pillars and walls. A few calm Buddha faces, lit by the candles, shine out of the darkness; and above all is the glittering canopy of stars about the shadowy spire.

People think there is no merit in repairing pagodas, or that if there is, it belongs to the original founder. This is very widely believed. But it is not at all true. The Burmese are always restoring their more important monuments. But as there are so many thousands of unimportant ones throughout the land, it is obvious that the majority of them *must* fall into ruin. As monuments of the Buddha's Law of Transiency and Impermanence, they are more than ever eloquent in their decay. New generations build new pagodas—but they care for the old ones very much all the same. The Burmese will never be charmed from their pagoda building. It has a great attraction for them, and there is distinction in the title of *Paya Taga*, given to those who have founded a pagoda. They know that they are doing their little bit to hand the grandeur of Buddhism down the ages.

The various parts of a pagoda have fanciful meanings. All are claimed to be models of the Sulamuni, that fabulous shrine on Mount Meru in Paradise, in which

To Gandhara also Burma owes its only authentic Buddha relic; and yet another authentic relic has been found there, on the site of ancient Taxila, as these pages are in the press.

The brick steps leading up to pagodas, and more especially to monasteries, are very massive and ornate. Sometimes the sides are built to represent a dragon. This is an Indian mythical monster, called *Makara*. Sometimes the dragon is not actually fashioned, but merely suggested conventionally by the familiar curling ends of masonry.

Large brick lions called *Chinthay* are usually placed on either side of the entrance to a pagoda. Their meaning and origin is obscure. But there is a legend about them which runs as follows:—Once there was a princess, of such a passionate nature, that she had to be expelled from the palace and abandoned in the forests. There, she met *Kay-tha-ya-za*, the Lion King, and fell in love with him. In time, a male child was born to them, called *Thee-ha-ba-hu*. When *Thee-ha-ba-hu* was grown up, the Lion King returned,

were attributed to his having killed his father. The wise men declared that the only cure was to set up an image of the lion and *shiko* to it. *Thee-ha-ba-hu* was proud, and disliked the idea. So the difficulty was solved by placing lion images *near* the pagoda, where the king, when *shikoing* the shrine, would also be bowing to the lion at the same time. With the exception of the fallen lions of the Mengun Pagoda, the biggest I know of are the two which gaze out across the Irrawaddy from Sale.

The following explanation of the word "Pagoda" is given by Mr. Taw Sein Ko in the Burma Research Society's journal of June 1912, page 74:—"In India pagodas are called *topes*, which is derived from *stupa* in Sanskrit, and *thupa* in Pali. In Ceylon they are called *dagobas*, which is derived from *dhatu-garbha* in Sanskrit, and *dhatu-gabbha* in Pali, meaning a relic chamber. The word pagoda is believed to be the transformation by metathesis of the word *dagoba*." The Burmese call the pagoda "*paya*" or Lord, a title which has been assumed by many kings, and is applied to priests, pagodas, and Buddha figures. It is the same word as the Siamese *pra*.[1]

Pagodas are always supposed to contain some sort of relic. As a rule they are not very valuable, and consist of round pebbles, bones of saints, metal figure

[1] As in the name of the French Province of Laung-pra-bang *laung* meaning embryo, and *pra* meaning Buddha. The two words were adopted as a title by Burma's greatest king—King ALAUNG-PRA.

It has been the earnest desire of Burma for centuries to possess a real relic of Buddha. Several alleged relics have been imported, as in 1576 when Dharmapala, king of Ceylon, sent Bureng Naung a tooth of Buddha which was enshrined at Pegu. A reputed forehead bone was said to be buried in a pagoda at Tharekhettara by King Dwuttab-aung. Anarawatta intended to transfer it to the Shwezigon at Pugan, but when the old pagoda was pulled down, the relic could not be found.[1] Recently, when an authentic relic seemed past hoping for, one suddenly came to light near Peshawur. It was presented in 1910 to Burma. A splendid pagoda, called the Dat-daw, or 'Pagoda of Royal Relics,' has been built on Mandalay hill for its reception, at a cost of over a lakh of rupees. I shall describe the extraordinary history of this relic later on at greater length.

of the Buddha, and votive tablets of brick or clay. In the days when pagoda building was a perfect craze, as at Pugan in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, kings and nobles used to bury wealth in the form of gold and silver images. A jewel was often placed in the head and in the pit of the stomach of Buddha figures, with the result that most images of antiquity have had the forehead and body broken into by thieves. Of the reputed five thousand pagodas at Pugan, there is scarcely one which has not been thus desecrated by treasure-hunters. With unerring judgment they located the relic-chamber in the lower part of the dome, and drove a shaft into it through the brick work. The chief culprits at Pugan are said to have been the Chinese invaders of 1284, who, though they would not otherwise damage Buddhist shrines, did not scruple to take the valuables they contained. The holes they made are visible in hundreds still. As a rule, Burmese are rarely responsible for such outrages which they consider contemptible. Occasionally, however, one hears of a pagoda being broken into by dacoits.

It is the custom to cover certain venerable Buddha images with gold leaf. After a few generations, the thick deposit of gold becomes valuable. Such a gold-encrusted Buddha was stolen from a pagoda in Gangaw, as I shall describe elsewhere. The conscience-stricken thief cast it intact into the river. It was eventually found stranded on a sand-bank twenty miles away, and restored with great ceremony to its altar.

It has been the earnest desire of Burma for centuries to possess a real relic of Buddha. Several alleged relics have been imported, as in 1576 when Dharmapala, king of Ceylon, sent Bureng Naung a tooth of Buddha which was enshrined at Pegu. A reputed forehead bone was said to be buried in a pagoda at Tharekhettara by King Dwuttab-aung. Anarawatta intended to transfer it to the Shwezigon at Pugan, but when the old pagoda was pulled down, the relic could not be found.[1] Recently, when an authentic relic seemed past hoping for, one suddenly came to light near Peshawur. It was presented in 1910 to Burma. A splendid pagoda, called the Dat-daw, or 'Pagoda of Royal Relics,' has been built on Mandalay hill for its reception, at a cost of over a lakh of rupees. I shall describe the extraordinary history of this relic later on at greater length.

At Pugan there were many whimsical customs connected with pagoda building. Sometimes the whole history of the shrine was written on the bricks, as at the Mingala Zedi. The idea was quite fanciful, as only a word or two was inscribed on each brick, and no one was ever likely to pull down and sort out a million or so in their proper order to read. It was then also the custom, when building a very big monument, to set aside one brick in every ten thousand, with which to erect a small model near by, called the *Ka-ye-paya*.

[1] Phayre.

the jewels of the Buddha, the *Dhamma* (Law) and the *Sangha* (Priesthood). In these three jewels all Buddhists "take refuge." Then there is the *Lek ka-na-yae thon ba*, the formula known even to most Europeans; *A-neik-sa: Dhukka: Anattha* (You must die; you cannot avoid sorrow; all things are transient). This is not a pessimistic creed, but a statement of the "Truth of sorrow" which helps people to seek "Escape from sorrow." There are also vows to be taken classed as the "five lesser" and "eight lesser and greater."[1] Another formula repeated in the pagoda is the *Para mi seh ba*, or 'Ten perfections,' which are charity, observance of the Law, seclusion, wisdom, diligence, truthfulness, love of all beings, determination, forbearance, and equanimity. But, as St. Paul also says, "The first of these is charity."

There is nothing ever seen in a Burmese pagoda that is obscene or revolting. Only the crude wall pictures of Hell are grotesque and savage, and seem out of keeping in such sublime surroundings. They cover the inner walls of many religious buildings, such as the beautiful Arakan Pagoda at Mandalay. The wicked are shown suffering every kind of agony. Devils torture them, flay them, burn them, and boil them: and one is

[1] The five vows (or *panca silam*) are to abstain from killing, from stealing, from sexual excess, from deceit and slander, and from intoxicants. The eight vows include in addition the undertaking to abstain from solid food after mid-day, from dancing, plays, and worldly amusements, and from the use of ornaments perfumes, and other vanities.

In building the *Ka-ye-paya*, the architect had to employ all the bricks thus set aside, using neither one more nor one less. So, the puzzling out of the model was a good deal more troublesome than the construction of a big pagoda itself.[1]

It is a popular error to suppose that pagodas, like churches, are used as places of worship. This is not so. A man's destiny is in his own hands, and he shapes it according to his deeds. The gods cannot help, and therefore are not prayed to. People kneeling in the pagodas, who *appear* to be praying, are really repeating scriptures, texts, formulæ, or vows. Buddha images and pagodas are set up, not to be worshipped or adored, but to visualize the Law taught by the Buddha and to keep it always and everywhere before the eyes of the people. The building of such monuments is therefore not as useless as one might at first suppose. In cities and villages, on mountains and cliffs, and all up and down the river ways, men are thus reminded constantly of the Law.

The passages repeated at pagoda are numerous. They are taught to the people when they attend the monastic schools, or *Phoongyi-kyaungs*, as children. (Every Burmese boy assumes the yellow robes of a monk, if only for a few weeks.) The simplest formula is the *Yatana-thon-ba*, or 'Three jewels.' These are

1 Some other facts relating to pagodas will be found in my "Pugan" (Hanthawaddy Press, Rangoon).

the jewels of the Buddha, the *Dhamma* (Law) and the *Sangha* (Priesthood). In these three jewels all Buddhists "take refuge." Then there is the *Lek ka-na-yae thon ba*, the formula known even to most Europeans; *A-neik-sa: Dhukka: Anattha* (You must die; you cannot avoid sorrow; all things are transient). This is not a pessimistic creed, but a statement of the "Truth of sorrow" which helps people to seek "Escape from sorrow." There are also vows to be taken classed as the "five lesser" and "eight lesser and greater."[1] Another formula repeated in the pagoda is the *Para mi seh ba*, or 'Ten perfections,' which are charity, observance of the Law, seclusion, wisdom, diligence, truthfulness, love of all beings, determination, forbearance, and equanimity. But, as St. Paul also says, "The first of these is charity."

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at first naturally offended, when everything else about the pagoda is so soothing and beautiful.

However, one should not be too easily disturbed, Hell-fire is an implement which the Christian church itself has relinquished only in our own times. These Burmese paintings remind me of one of Bernado's pictures in the Santa Maria Novella in Florence. His fresco of Heaven and Hell, with its embracings and dancing on one side, and its awful tortures on the other, might perfectly well change places with the worst picture in the Arakan. Nor is his the only one. Many of Fra Angelico's mawkish conceptions of Paradise might as well be Mahommedan abodes of *houris*, These Buddhist Hells are after all only the result of centuries of superstition; while those of Bernado are actually sanctioned by the Revelation of a father of the church. If you could get an artist to paint still more realistically than Fra Angelico has done, what a ghastly picture he could make for Christians. It would be worse than the grossest fresco in Tibet. Think of the revealed earthquakes, the dropping stars, the slaughters, the rivers and seas of blood, that must distract the happy ones on Zion. Rudra and Devi and Kali would be less dreadful than the many-eyed, many-horned beasts that St. John saw. Think of the terror of the "wrath of God"—"an angel flying through the midst of Heaven, saying with a loud voice woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth." Think of the revengeful spirits of the Saints crying, "How long, O Lord, holy

and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood" (Rev. VI, 10). And the torture of the locust scorpions which "should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months, and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days men shall seek death and not find it." (Rev. IX, 5 and 6). And "they gnawed their tongues in pain" (Rev. XVI, 10).[1] There is nothing to compare with all that in the Arakan or any other pagoda I know of. There is nothing equal to it in the most extravagant nightmares of Lamaism. And all these things *are* nightmares no doubt. Buddhism no more *teaches that kind of Hell than modern Christianity* does. It simply comes to this, that man has "sought out many inventions."[2]

The life-history of all pagodas is more or less the same. For a few years presents of flowers and candles are lavished upon them. For two or three generations at most, they are painted and gilded with gold leaf. Then all begins to tarnish, and the silken-clad people attend them no more. There are no more flowers on the altars. Candles no longer illuminate the calm Buddha face in the evening. The decay is very gradual, but it is the same in all cases without variation. Little sprigs of peepul trees appear in the masonry. The wood carving rots. The tall *ta-gone-taing* poles lean to

[1] Rev. IV, 6 and 7; Rev. VIII, 13; Rev. XIV, 10 and 11; Rev. XV, 1 and XVI, 1.

[2] Ecclesiastes, VII, 29.

one side. The golden crown of bells falls away from the spire. Grass grows up on the now deserted pavement. Decades pass into centuries. The jungle has fought with and overthrown the outer wall. The peepal sprigs on the dome have grown into large trees, and rent the brick-work asunder. *A-nat-ta,* all things pass to destruction. This is the Law. Presently the jungle will utterly destroy that once bright pagoda.

I passed such a pagoda this evening near our village. Nothing of it is visible now, except a bit of its spire in the midst of a thicket, and one of its lions, which is tilted and ready to fall. The other has already fallen, leaving only its frayed brick fore-legs standing. The path to the shrine has long since been closed by a tangle of creepers. No one may pass along it now to where the Buddha still sits quietly watching the decay. Creepers have enshrouded him. A hamadryad sweeps his black coils over the pavement where once women knelt; and at night, fireflies consume themselves before the Buddha upon the altar rails.

CHAPTER V.

About Buddhism.

Buddhism is the central feature of Burma. Its influence is visible everywhere. Its monuments cover the land. Its essence broods unseen over everything. It hallows the repose of deserted shrines. It is the support of the people. It impregnates their ideas, guides their actions, supplies their motives, pervades their atmosphere.

"Buddhism," says Paul Dahlke, "is that wonderful teaching which declares life to be sorrow and yet is free from pessimism; which apparently inculcates the profoundest egoism and yet is charged with loftiest morality; which denies the 'I,' the soul, and yet teaches absolute responsibility for our own deeds through re-birth; which is without God or faith or prayer, and yet offers the most certain salvation."

I do not propose to attempt the impossible, and concentrate the whole of the Buddha idea into one short chapter. I believe I can do a more useful work in explaining certain points about which I have noticed many of us are in error. As I said before, the reasoning out of Buddhism from a European standpoint is bound to lead to misunderstanding. The theory of Buddhism

is so completely novel that the English language has not even the words to explain it. We are obliged to use terms like "re-incarnation," "former lives," "worship," "merit," "monk," and so on, for ideas that they express very imperfectly. Buddhism in these terms appears a mass of inconsistencies. Besides all this, its morality, its outward forms and ceremonies are so strangely like those of Christianity that at first we fail to see how diametrically opposite every line of Buddhist thought really is to our own. In Europe we were started all wrong in this matter by those very pioneers who did so much good work in translating Buddhist scriptures. But they were not Buddhists themselves, and so when they read that the first Truth was the "Truth of Sorrow," they very naturally supposed, as we all should, that this was a faith of pessimism. When they saw that the gods were powerless, they believed this was atheism. And when they found that *Nirvana* was a Ceasing, they called it annihilation. And what they then wrote in ignorance has since been generally accepted as fact. If we know nothing else about Buddhism, at least we have all heard this, that it is pessimistic, atheistic, and annihilistic. And when we come out to a Buddhist land we are surprised by certain strange inconsistencies. These people, who deny God, set up images! Though they deny Divine help and forgiveness of sin, yet they pray devoutly! Though they may not take life, yet they eat meat reely! Though their Buddha taught that

killing was sin, we know he must have killed hundreds of germ creatures with every mouthful of air and water. Lastly, we wonder, how it is that these Burmese of a gloomy faith are always happy and laughing.

I propose only to explain the above points, for I wish very much to show that Buddhism is capable of being a world-religion; that the profound change that has come over Christianity in the last few progressive years has been an unconscious progress towards Buddhism. Truth for the whole world is one. Truth is a logical thing. Therefore, if we all use our commonsense, as we are doing now more and more, there must naturally be a drawing together.

The first point is that Buddha taught sorrow in all things. That is the bed-rock of Buddhism. But it is only the beginning of a search for the "escape from sorrow," which is an entirely optimistic idea. The "Noble Fourfold Path" of the Buddha is this—Sorrow: The cause of sorrow: The path which leads to sorrow's Ceasing: *The ceasing of sorrow.* Buddhism finds Sorrow in everything, but it is not sorrow which it seeks for and wants. It seeks for and wants *the ceasing of Sorrow,* the escape from all this sadness. "This *only* do I teach, oh disciples, Sorrow and *the ceasing of sorrow.*" That is what the Buddha said frequently, and he repeated it again emphatically just before his death:—"this *only* do I teach." That is the whole essence of Buddhism. If you realise that everything is subject to decay and change, to birth,

sickness, old age, and death; and if you seek to escape from all that, you are consciously or unconsciously a Buddhist. You have knowingly or unknowingly "entered the Path." The truth of Buddhism is universal. It applies equally to Turks, Infidels and Christians, to gnats, and to mountain peaks. The breadth of its view is amazing. It excludes nothing. It imposes no dogmas. You are asked to believe nothing except what you can understand, and you are included in the great scheme, whether you understand it or not. Here is the advice of the Buddha himself:—"Accept nothing, brothers, merely because the teachers say it is so. That which you understand clearly to be right — accept that."

We are faced with the statement that: *All is full of sorrow.* Examine it. Do the things you look forward to ever come up to expectation? Is not every joy a fleeting thing? Even your family is a sorrow, because you love it so tenderly, and cannot in the end save it from death. The more you love, the more bitter the inevitable separation, when the beloved go down into the grave.

> "Sweet is fond love, but funeral-flames must kiss
> The breasts which pillow and the lips which clung."

What a dreadful idea! Certainly it is dreadful—but is it not real? If it is real there is no use in blinding ourselves to it. Here is a dreadful fact. Buddhism does not shirk it. It thoroughly grasps it and sets itself urgently to find an escape. Having seen the road

of escape we can face life calmly and happily. *This is the cause of sorrow*, that lust and hate and craving produce desire for existence, which in turn produces birth, which again opens the way to sickness, separation, old age, decay, and death—and so on all over again in ceaseless lives of pain, bound to the wheel. *And this is the way of escape. When lust and hate and craving cease, birth ceases, and with it ceases all that Sorrow.* Thus is Ceasing, *Nirvana*—the passionless, joyless, sorrowless state. Each single one of us is on a separate plane. We progress according to our strength. But there is hope for all creatures.

This Buddhism can only appeal to serious, thoughtful people. It is entirely opposed to the theory of "make the best of life while you may." That, surely, is merely shutting the eyes tight against what is obvious. It is the philosophy of Omar Khayyam, if indeed, such poor argument as his can be called philosophy at all. If then, we realise the Truth of Sorrow, it is no use creating a fool's paradise by ignoring it. There is on the other hand no need to let it spoil our lives. The way is clear. We can go along it merrily, as the Burmese do. "I also am amongst those who live happily," said Buddha, the teacher of Universal Sorrow.

There are many Buddhist Heavens, and they are full of Gods. So the charge of atheism need not be argued at length. Buddhism does not deny the existence of Gods at all. It only denies their omnipotence. They are in Heavens, but not in *Nirvana*, and therefore

like everything else are subject to the Law, and bound to the wheel of change and impermanence. They are Beings infinitely further advanced on the path than ourselves, but even they cannot evade the swinging of the wheel of Cause and Effect, which revolves just and true, not swerving a hair's breadth. They cannot prevent the consequence of any deed. Therefore, they cannot wipe out any sin, nor can they help humanity except by their influence for good. Neither can they make men victims of their wrath. The devils are powerless to rob a good deed of its reward. Men work out their own salvation unaided and unimpeded. The Buddha was not a God, but only a man who reached enlightenment. He has not *saved* the world. Only he has *shown the way,* and by so doing has become the Light of the World.

Thus, while denying the omniscience of God, Buddhism is in no sense atheistic. On the contrary, it recognises the benign influence of beings like Amida, and Kwannon, Mother of Mercy. All (so-called) Northern Buddhists believe in god-like Buddhisattvas, such as Amida, Buddha of boundless Light, who, it is said, refuses to pass into *Nirvana*, until the last little grain of life has been influenced to "enter the Path."

Buddhas are believed to have visited the world at intervals of five thousand years to re-state the Law. The Burmese recognise the last four who have been, but know practically nothing about Maitreya, the next Buddha to come. And they know nothing about

Amida and Kwannon (or as the Chinese call it Kwan-yin). In China and Japan Amida and Kwannon rank first, and the Gautama Buddha has only a secondary place.

Now we come to the error that *Neikban* is annihilation. It is; but only the annihilation of sorrow, change, decay, and impermanence. You naturally ask—is it the annihilation of individuality? The only reply I can give to that is to repeat that Buddhists never have an individuality to start with. In the West we cling to our identity, and wish for it to be immortal. We cultivate a secret individuality which only cuts us off from the rest of Nature, and segregates us each in a separate prison. But is our identity really permanent? See how we change day by day. Our speech, actions, and tastes of to-day are quite different to what they were even a week ago. Looking back ten years we seem to have been quite different people. We are simply a flame which burns on the same for ever, and yet is not the same, but changes moment by moment. Some one once told me that that was most unsatisfactory. Well, it does not seem so when you are accustomed to it. He said *Nirvana*, the fruit of Buddhism, was all bitter, like a Dead Sea Apple. As a matter of fact, *Neikban* is just the annihilation of Dead Sea Apples. Anything that looks fair outside and is really all tasteless within is delusion, and *Nirvana* is the end of delusion. What exactly *Nirvana* is, of course, no man can say, any more

than Heaven can be correctly described. But it is the attainment of profoundest wisdom and boundless insight, and this produces a peace of mind, immovable and past all understanding. It is a state, not a place—a state of complete sorrowlessness and peace and satisfaction.

"*Nirvana*," says Lafcadio Hearn, "is no cessation, but an emancipation. It means only the passing of conditioned being into unconditioned being—the fading of all mental and physical phantoms into the light of formless Omnipotence and Omniscience."[1]

Paul Dahlke explains it thus: "As darkness can only be explained by light, as the opposite of light; as rest can only be explained by motion, as the opposite of motion; so also *Nirvana* can only be explained by sorrow, as the opposite of sorrow."[2]

The following passages, taken from the "Questions of King Milinda" illustrate *Nirvana* in oriental language:—

P. 106. "The King said: 'Is cessation *Nirvana*?'

"'Yes, your Majesty.'

"'How is that, Nagasena?'

"'All foolish individuals, oh King, take pleasure in the senses and in the objects of sense, find delight in them, continue to cleave to them. Hence they are

[1] "Gleanings in Buddha Fields," p. 213.
[2] "Buddhist Essays," p. 88.

carried down by that flood of human passions, they are not set free from birth, old age, and death, from grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair—they are not set free, I say, from suffering. But the wise man, oh King, the disciple of the Noble One, neither takes pleasure in those things nor continues to cleave to them. And inasmuch as he does not, in him craving ceases, and by the cessation of craving grasping ceases, and by the cessation of grasping becoming ceases, and when becoming has ceased birth ceases, and with its cessation old age, death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair cease to exist. Thus has cessation brought about the end of all that aggregation of pain. Thus it is that ceasing is *Nirvana*.'"

P. 196. "If you ask 'How is *Nirvana* to be known?'—it is by freedom from distress and danger, by confidence, by peace, by calm, by bliss, by happiness, by delicacy, by purity, by freshness."

P. 189. "As a lotus, oh King, is untarnished by foul water, so is *Nirvana* untarnished by an evil disposition."

P. 191. "As a mountain peak is very lofty, so also is *Nirvana* exalted. . . . And again, as a mountain peak is immovable, so also is *Nirvana*. And again, as a mountain peak is inaccessible, so also is *Nirvana* inaccessible to all evil dispositions. And again, as a mountain peak is a place where no plants can grow, so also is *Nirvana* a condition in which no evil dispositions can grow. And again, as a mountain peak is

that is beside the point. To transgress is sin, and carries its own reward.

The essence of sin is *intention*. Therefore, if meat is available, the slaying of which could not have been prevented, as for instance, at the dinner table of a non-Buddhist, there is no sin in eating it. Similarly there is no sin in the unintentional and unavoidable slaughter of germ life by breathing, walking, or drinking.

Meat-eating by the Burmese is perfectly indefensible. It is a fact that, when the people of Mandalay, carried away by the eloquence of the Ledi Saya-daw, refrained from meat, slaughter of cattle almost ceased. Where meat is obviously butchered for the use of Buddhists, it is not permissible to eat it. Of course the Burmese know this quite well.

* * * * *

What Buddhists *do*, and what Buddhism *is*, are two very different things, which is true also of Christians and Christianity. In no respect is Buddhism illogical. It never departs from the path of commonsense. Its principles, venerable with the age of centuries, are those which govern the latest discoveries of science, namely Cause and Effect, in exact proportion.

Buddhism, the teaching of the Compassionate One, has even been accused of selfishness, because each man is taught to work out his own salvation without

CHAPTER VI.

Oil on the Waters.

I am travelling up the river on one of the Irrawaddy Flotilla's Mail boats. We have just left Yenangyaung, and the usual aspect of the Irrawaddy is only now beginning to reassert itself. The quiet peace of the voyage is always rudely disturbed at Yenangyaung and the mind offended by the unsightliness of the place. It is dirty and forlorn and quite different from the rest of Burma. Instead of pretty white pagodas you see from the river a forest of oil-well spires. The word Yenangyaung means "oil streams." A greasy coat of oil floats upon the river. It is the greatest oil-field in all Burma. Geologists say that there is a fold in the clay strata, into which the oil drains from all round, as into a saucer. It has been worked for half a century and its supply is apparently inexhaustible. The drillers who sink the wells are all Americans who keep the business exclusively in their own hands. Their wells are sometimes more than two thousand feet deep. They are probably the most skilful drillers in the world, and long experience enables them to tell with fair accuracy whether the shales they bring up from the depths of the earth are likely to produce much oil or

not. So, as their services are valuable, they receive enormous salaries. Everything is done for their convenience. Unfortunately, they are often very troublesome, truculent fellows, ready to take full advantage of their strong position. But since cent. per cent. *profits are desirable, the drillers must be endured.* An occasional strike which involves a "bust" in Rangoon without leave of absence has to be smoothed over, and when the hotel and drink bills connected with the said "bust" are duly paid by their indulgent employers, they return again bleary of eye and buzzy of head to their wells. I should add that all the drillers of Yenangyaung are not of this type. Many of them are of course very good fellows. It is *not* of them that I write, but of the bad ones who are a disgrace and a discredit to white men in this country. I wish to be very clear about that. I feel sure, then, that people who live in Yenangyaung will not misunderstand me, but will even sympathize with, and share, what I suffer.

We have only had one driller on board this voyage. He was a new hand on his way out from the States. Poor lumbering Yahoo! He looked and felt out of place on a first class deck. He has been a fish out of water ever since he left his friends in San Francisco two months ago. I suppose it was because he was conscious of his awkwardness that he asserted himself so aggressively, spat about the deck, blew his nose in his fingers, and discarded collar, coat, and tie in a devil-may-care manner. Our skipper happens

to be a faddist about his decks, and a staff of stewards has been chasing after this driller with tobacco tins for him to spit into. Either the tins were too small, or the driller was an uncommonly bad shot. The crisis arrived last night at dinner, when he was refused a place at table till he had buttoned his shirt across his hairy chest. So he sulked and dined in the second class. I am afraid he was not greatly missed, for his conversation was punctuated with strange and original oaths. He devoured jam with every course from soup to coffee, and in the intervals of "guessing" picked his teeth with a fork.

Although the steamer approaches with its usual marvellous manœuvres, though the anchor thunders down with its accustomed splash, and though the lascars make their ordinary perilous leap with the shore rope, the Yenangyaung call is nevertheless different to any other. The Indian coolies who swarm on board are displeasing to look upon, after the happy chattering Burmese crowds of other river-side ports. Idle drillers and prostitutes lounge on the jetty to welcome new arrivals with encouraging yells in the Yankee language. An army of their servants come with them, against whom it is wise to lock cabin-doors. They are a crafty, swivel-eyed crowd, whom no one else in Burma would employ at all as *Lugalays*.[1] Arrivals are celebrated with a great popping of beer corks.

[1] Servants.

You might pick up a dozen novel cuss words in the saloon in five minutes, if you felt your own stock inadequate. Presently the steamer hoots, and they tumble on shore, and you see them tearing off home on their ponies. "White coolies" is what the Burmese contemptuously call them.

Yenangyaung is already far behind. Its disagreeable taste is not easily got rid of, but gradually we are slipping back into our old quiet ways. A fresh breeze blows across the river. Quaint white pagodas on the river bluffs, with long stair-ways leading up to them, and with ruined lions guarding their gates, flit past; and the lascars' monotonous call of soundings comes drowsily across from the great flat we have alongside in tow. Thank Heavens! drillers are more or less localized in and near their oil-fields.

But there was once a driller who travelled for the sake of his health up the Chindwin river in the steamer *Tiddim*. Nature had appropriately shaped him like the beer barrels he loved. He was very broad in the middle and just a little narrower at each end. Before he started, he drank himself into d. t. and saw the most appalling creatures in the way of pink mice. Later on, he saw still more dreadful things which made him scream with terror. I fully believe his whisky-besotted soul had caught a glimpse of the hells awaiting it. No one could control him, not even the Japanese girl he had hired from 29th Street to live with him, and who fleeced him as she despised him. Somehow the

doctors brought him round, and someone, who could have known little about drillers, suggested that a change of scene would do him good, and that a trip up the quiet reaches of the Chindwin would soothe his shaken nerves.

In very truth the scenery of the Chindwin is lovely. But that drunken brain and those bleary eyes were past the appeal of burning sunsets and the pale, calm half hours which follow them. The low wooded hills, studded with white pagodas, slipped by unheeded. Our hero sat morosely in his cabin, with a row of six whisky bottles on the table before him. Once he unlocked his door and sat down to a meal; but his language was so disgusting that the captain ordered him to leave the ship. Thereupon he aggressively hitched round his shooter and asked if there was any one on board who could throw him out. After consultation it was found that there was not, and so the driller retired forthwith behind his locked door for a further period of two days.

They were now running up into the celebrated Shwe Pe-way whirlpool. It was the middle of the Rains, and the river was in full flood. The seething torrent had risen to the foot of the small white pagoda, which at other seasons stands on a rock high above the river level. It requires nerve and skill to take a steamer up when the river is washing the Shwe Pe-way pagoda. The tumult of the waters was deafening. Half a mile of river swept round and round in a formidable whirlpool,

through which no boat could live. Logs raced madly round it, sometimes leaping perpendicularly to the surface. But there is at all times a narrow and safe passage which hugs the right bank. Its waters are pretty well known, but it requires nevertheless the skipper's undivided attention to take a steamer through.

It was precisely at this delicate moment that our driller chose to emerge from his cabin into the saloon. There was a ventilator all along the roof through which the skipper's ankles could be seen, as he stood at the wheel on the bridge. The Yankee brought with him a rifle, which he now loaded with shaky hands. He had two hundred rounds lying on the bed in his cabin, and with these he opened an uncertain fire on the ankles at the ventilator, which soon began to leap and prance wildly, though their owner could not possibly leave the wheel without sending the ship and all on board her to a ghastly death in the whirlpool. Some Burmans ran into the saloon, but retired before the driller's threats. After this interruption, practice was resumed at the skipper's ankles. The roof of the *Tiddim's* saloon is riddled with bullet-holes to this day.

his grasp. It was bravely done, but the revolver came away easily from limp hands. The driller was already dead. He had shot himself in the mouth and his brains were spattered over the cabin wall from floor to roof.

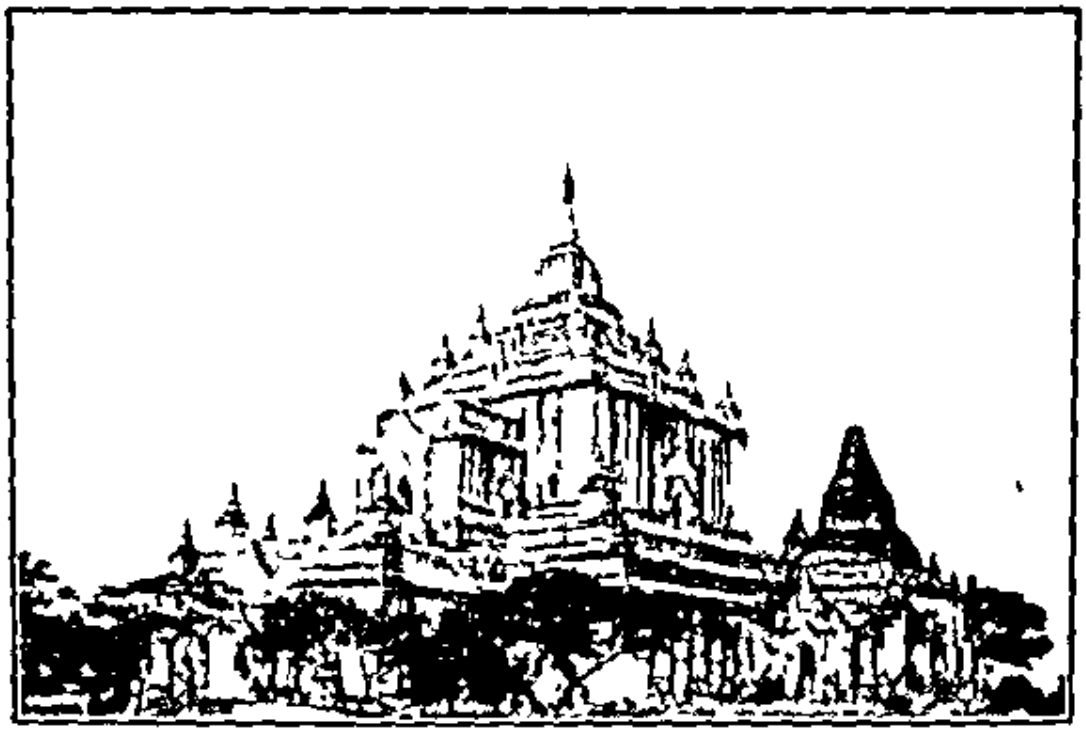
They tied him between two mattresses and "threw him out" without difficulty at the next stop.

CHAPTER VII.

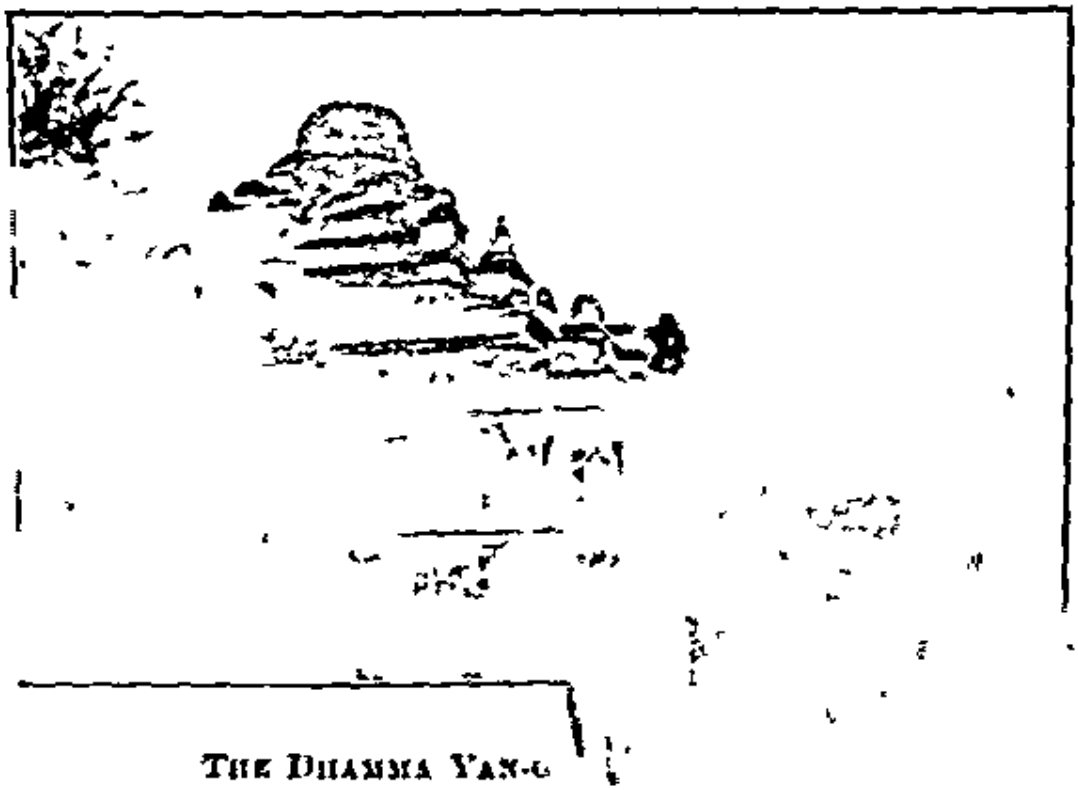
Pakokku.

By the middle of the Rains I was ordered to Pakokku, and left Magwe on the Irrawaddy Flotilla steamer *Nepaul*. Her captain had been in the company's service for 34 years, and spoke of the times of King Thibaw, and of his predecessor Mindon Min. In those days, he said, there was a French Ambassador in Mandalay. The flotilla company's agent there was an Italian, who subsequently became one of Thibaw's ministers. This man seems to have made himself useful to the British Government, who presented him with Rs. 20,000 after annexation.

We stopped for the night at the little town of Salé, where, as I have said, two very big pagoda lions face the river. We found the *China* stuck on a sand-bank, and spent a couple of hours pulling her off. There is considerable danger of these big boats being stranded for a whole year, if they go aground when the river is at its highest. That was the fate of the *Taping*, which was shaken by earthquakes, and her skipper chased by elephants, before she was floated again the following Rains. We reached Salé after dark with the help of searchlights, whose beam swept up and down the bank, looking for familiar pagodas and



THE THATBYIN-NYU PAGODA (The Omniscient), PUGAN.



THE DHAMMA YAN-G

bamboo buoys to steer by. I strolled ashore after dinner and sat for a long while in the moonlight amidst the ghostly white spires and lions of a pagoda. It all looked very misty and ethereal. A bell chimed gently now and then. I think I like Burma best like that.

I came on board again to find Maung Mya's wife, Mah Shwe Chyok, in a sort of fit, during which she very nearly died. I can think of nothing more pathetic than those two figures clinging to one another in their crisis. What would it be to the rest of us if Mah Shwe Chyok died? Why, just a passing feeling of pity. But for them it meant the dull pain of separation. And after all, such separations threaten us all continually. Truly, as Buddha taught, life is all sorrow. *A-neik-sa*, all men must die. *Dhokka*, all things are sorrow. *A-nat-ta*, all things are perishable. Here we cling to each other, protecting those we love. And, in spite of everything, we cannot save them. Happily, in this case we pulled Mah Shwe Chyok through; but that episode on the deck of the steamer moved me greatly.

Early next morning we passed Pugan, the old 11th to 13th century capital of Burma. At that time Burma was at the height of its magnificence. This is the city of Anawratta and Kyanzittha, the hero kings. Pagodas line the river's bank for ten miles. The Gawda-Palin, the Thatbyin-nyu, and the Ananda rise like derelict cathedrals above the Irrawaddy. Pugan continues along the river to the modern village and landing stage of Nyaung U, near which stands the golden dome

of the Shwezigon Pagoda, where a great festival is held every year. Pugan is a place of supreme interest, and I visited it often from Pakokku, but as I have already written a small book about it, I need not describe it further here.[1] Seen from the river in the early morning, its domes and spires float above the river mist, like the mirage of a dream city.

I remained in Pakokku until the winter came round. It is not a very nice place. For one thing society fought—relentlessly, tooth and nail. Some places have a long-standing reputation for quarrelling. Pakokku is one of them. It is moreover in the centre of the dry zone. It is brown, parched, dry, and dull.

So I saw as little of it as I could. I had two other posts in the district at Pauk, which was about 44 miles distant, and at Gangaw, which was nearly 150 miles. To reach Pauk, a river called the Yaw Chaung had to be crossed twice. It was very troublesome after heavy rain and was sometimes impassable for days together. But in fine weather I used to ride through to Pauk in a day, starting in the suffused light of dawn, when the wet foliage glowed in the red rays of the rising sun. I rested during the heat of the day and rode on again through the palms in the quiet evening light until it got dark, and the Milky Way spread across the heavens, and fireflies drifted past in trails of phosphorescence.

[1] "Pugan" (Hanthawaddy Press, Rangoon). The usual spelling of this name is PAGĀN.

Pauk is only a little country town. The day of my first arrival in 1913 happened to be the Viceroy's birthday. At Lady Hardinge's request, children's festivals were being held all over the country to celebrate Lord Hardinge's escape from the bomb thrown at him in Delhi. Poor Lady Hardinge, whose untimely death was so near at hand, would have been touched, I think, could she have seen that simple fête, held to express sympathy with her even in this remote Burmese village. The villagers and Maung Pein, their S. D. O.,[1] had raised nearly Rs. 150 between them. It was a great day for the children. The boys swarmed a greasy pole, and every one nearly died with laughter at their efforts, until at last the pole was worked dry all the way up. The prize at the top was a bag of rupees and a bit of silk.

In the late nineties Pauk was the scene of one of those ridiculous "revolutions" which occur from time to time in Burma, and which are only dangerous to the foolish villagers who take part in them. There was just such a rising in Mandalay in 1897. It was headed by a monk known as the "Mad Phoongyi." His force of silly old men was armed with *dhars* and matchlocks. Their object was to seize Thibaw's Palace. There is, or was, a belief that whoever occupied the palace was master of Burma, and that enemies expelled from it would gracefully leave the country.

[1] Sub-divisional Officer.

I have said that there *is*, or *was*, this belief. Perhaps it would be more correct to say it still does exist. Not long ago an attempt was made to exhume the body of the Ain-Shé-Min, the heir to Mindon Min's kingdom, who was murdered nearly 40 years ago to make way for Thibaw. It was intended to lay the bones at dead of night upon the Lion Throne in the palace. This is not the first time that the Ain-Shé-Min's bones have been disturbed.

Beyond Pauk, the Gangaw road is very bad, especially in the Rains. In places it passes through rice-fields, which have flooded the road, so that ponies flounder belly-deep through ooze and water. Indeed, on these roads I sometimes think we are cheap at a travelling allowance of 12 annas a mile. But people in Burma assume a philosophic attitude towards the P. W. D.[1] and all its works. We have to accept the logic of the Samarian lepers: "If we go back we die, and if we go forward we die also; so let's go forward." So we floundered on across rice-fields, through swift rivers, and deep jungles.

All this is good shooting country. There are panther, bison, *thamin*, barking deer, and occasionally tigers in the forests, while from time to time one hears of a wild tusker attacking one of the tame male elephants, who drag teak logs down to the rivers for the Bombay Burma Company. Presently we climbed into low hills,

[1] Public Works Department.

densely wooded with bamboo jungle. Often it was possible to gallop here for a long way over level ridges, where Nature—not the Public Works—had made the road excellent. Then for a moment we dipped from jungle into a valley cultivated with high Indian corn. It might have been a quiet bear haunt of Kashmir—only here, parrots are worse enemies to the crops than bears, for the green parrots tear the sheaths of the corn heads. In Burma the sheaths are valuable for they are used as the outer skin of the "whacking white cheroots" which men, women, and little children continually smoke. There was a *machan*[1] in the middle of every field, with strings radiating to bamboo clappers in all corners. The boys loved to set these clappers in motion under the very noses of our ponies as we passed. We spent the heat of the first day at Yeabyu, and crossed the Pondaung hills to Kyin in the evening. The Pondaung range is about 3,000 feet high. It is densely wooded. As we crossed it in the evening, everything was very still. Nothing moved, except an occasional palm frond, which waved about furiously all by itself, as some local air current caught it. The silence was only broken now and then by the cry of a bird or the whispering of a cascade. Most of the rest of this march of 146 miles was through forest just like this—all wet and dripping and richly green, and hung about with creepers, whose stems were as

1 A bamboo platform.

They quickly become Burmanized. But the new arrivals are queer folk. They are very wild, very naked, and very poor, and if fresh from the hills will run in terror from the presence of a white man. Indeed, a white man seen at long intervals is almost the only reminder the people ever get of the central Government—except at taxing time. The village *Thugyi*; or Headman is their only authority; and he is one of themselves. The village is divided into groups of ten houses, under a *Seh ain gaung*, or 'ten house head.' The *Thugyi* settles small theft cases, and has powers up to a five rupees fine, or 24 hours stocks. These powers are rarely used. He keeps a visitors' book, a death and birth register, and a police visit book, which is signed by the policeman whose duty it is to pay the village a visit once a week. Gangaw has a population of 1,300 souls. The register showed a death-rate for September 1913 of ten. Of these one death occurred at the age of 66, another at 36, and all the rest at under 10 years of age. This illustrates the high mortality that exists amongst Burmese children. The births happened to be only five. Four were boys and one was a girl, but this must have been exceptionally low, for every Burmese village swarms with dear little kiddies.

While I was at Gangaw, a small image was stolen from its pagoda. *Such a thing rarely happens.* It was one of those Buddhas which pious people had plastered over with gold-leaf for generations, till its features and limbs were buried under the gold, and it

possessed a considerable money value. This one was believed to be worth Rs. 3,000. Apparently the thief was smitten with remorse, and threw it into the Myittha river. A few days later it was picked up by fishermen twenty miles down stream at Kaan, where it had stranded on a sand-bank. Kaan village, of course, believed it to be a heaven-sent image, and were with difficulty persuaded to return it. However, they did so at last, and a great procession conducted it back to its home in Gangaw.

I have already remarked that the Burmese have the knack of producing a great deal of dainty beauty out of a few cheap bits of bamboo and paper. The procession was, therefore, easily arranged—and, indeed, the pretty women, dressed for the occasion in delicate silks, with flowers in their dark hair and scarves floating about them, were themselves its best ornament. Behind them followed lines of children carrying paper lanterns, which they lit as dusk fell, and behind them again came dancers, and then last of all the village *lugyis*, or 'big men,' dressed in religious white, with the little gold Buddha in their midst, carried shoulder-high on his throne. Every one brought flowers for the pagoda, and charitable people distributed cigars and other presents to the procession as it passed. Those who were quite poor gave cups of water which were often gratefully accepted. As the light faded, the coloured lanterns shone brightly. Fire balloons sailed up into the sky. The pagoda was brilliantly illuminated,

and thus the little gold Buddha came back into his own again.

Little gold Buddha,
Who stole you away?
Little gold Buddha
By magic, they say,
You fled from your *paya*[1]
And went far away.

Little gold Buddha,
Did you weave a charm
Over the villain
Who plotted you harm,
Till he threw you away
In a fit of alarm?

In stately procession
Return to your shrine.
How sweet sound the gongs,
How bright the lamps shine,
As your people escort you
With honours divine.

There is no sound sweeter than the voice of Burmese gongs mingling in the dusk with a chant from the pagoda. No songs seem to me more homely than those which Burmese village-folk sing, returning from the day's work. Sometimes they sing and shout just to keep up their courage, for they are afraid to be out alone at night. They tell a joke about a young man who passed a haunted tree at dusk and took fright at some white lime on his own finger, mistaking it for the ghost. But more often the Burman sings out of pure light-heartedness. At times his song is not a proper song at all, but just made up out of his own thoughts as he goes along. On such occasions it is interesting to appear unconcerned and walk *along a little way* in front of him. You will then hear what thoughts a Burman thinks.

[1] Pagoda.

In country places where watches are still uncommon, time is calculated by the regular occurrences of the day. The going forth of the monks to beg is called *Soon twet*, a word used to express about 6 A.M. : and *Soon win jain*, the time of their return to the monastery, is about 10 o'clock. 9 A.M. is expressed by *Htoon-joot*—the hour when it begins to get hot, and ploughing ceases. Dusk is *Woot et jain*, the hour of evening devotion.

The Myittha, or 'Pleasant river,' flows past Gangaw, and 200 miles further on joins the Chindwin river at Kalewa, whence steamers run to Pakokku on the Irrawaddy. So we set off down the Myittha in one of the dug-out log boats which ply up and down. They are meant to be heavily weighted to the water's edge with a full cargo of grain. So with only my party of six Burmese plus three boatmen and a little baggage, the dug-out sat like a cork on the water with at least three centres of gravity, to one or other of which it frequently wallowed. A bundle of bamboos lashed along each side of such boats often helps to steady them: and also prevents them sinking if flooded. It was a jolly trip. We took four days over it. If there is more water in the river, the journey can be done in three days. The scenery was varied. Cultivation, cliffs, and villages drifted by, and then miles and miles of dense, silent jungle, matted together as usual with ropes of creeper. Sometimes, a thin straight creeper shot up 40 feet to a bough, and one wondered how it ever got there. We saw a few

monkeys and turtle, and many queer water birds; and once we passed a big snake *in mid-stream*. Jungle fowl came down in numbers to the river, and we heard barking deer in the forest. The natives carry on extensive fishing operations with traps and circular nets. They go about this work quite naked, except for the usual pair of tatooed shorts, which embroider their persons from waist to knee with dragons. We stopped every morning for breakfast in some wooded spot, and had a swim, or gathered orchid roots from the trees while the cooking was going on. The days were uncomfortably hot under the low matting roof of the boat, but there *followed long quiet afternoons, with rich sunsets*. Jungle and hill and cloud-land were reflected in the placid water. At dusk we stopped at some village, putting up either in the *Thugyi's*[1] house, or in the *Zayat*, or public rest-house. Every Burman village has a *Zayat*. It is usually an open teak shed, raised from the ground on piles. It is always kept clean for travellers, and the *Thugyi*, or headman, spreads rugs and matting round the walls. In the evening he and his wife, and a few *lugyis* (big men) come along and chat in their broad patois. *No one need go hungry or roof less in* this Buddhist land. Any one may use the *Zayat*. A meal is always to be had for the asking. In fact, the whole priesthood begs its food daily. It is not

[1] Headman.

the truculent begging of Indian charlatans. The *phoongyis* in a long line move slowly down the village street in absolute silence, with eyes downcast, and only stop when someone runs out with rice, and puts a spoonful into each monk's bowl. Thus, without asking and without thanking, they collect their food as Buddha taught them two thousand years ago.

They are good, simple, friendly folk, these Burmese villagers, whose world is bounded by Gangaw on one side and Kalewa on the other. Socially they are the most charming orientals I have ever met. Their manners, speech, and appearance are pleasing. Their delicacy about money is amazing. It *invariably* happened that the villagers, who carried the baggage up from the boat, dispersed without waiting for payment. No one hung about. If you go away without paying, no one vociferates. I tested my crew at the end of this 200 miles journey by pretending to dismiss them with their bare wages. They offered no protest whatever! What a revelation after India! But why India? Surely the worst tip-snatchers in this world are to be found on the continents of Europe and North America. In Burma tipping *really* becomes a pleasure—a view I never took of it before.

The Myittha has the distinction of being one of the few big rivers in the world which flow their whole length from south to north. The Chindwin which it meets flows almost north and south. To reach it, the Myittha has to descend by a series of rapids, which occur

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A hill near the gorge at Kalewa is supposed to have treasure buried in it against the advent of Maitreya Buddha. This is particularly interesting, because Maitreya Buddha, as I have mentioned, is usually supposed not to be recognised in Burma.

Kalewa, like Rome, is built on seven hills. A big peepul tree stands at the junction of the Myittha and Chindwin rivers. There is a golden pagoda, called the Shwe Mokdaw, on a hill near by, from which there are magnificent views in all directions. Kalewa is quite one of the prettiest places in Upper Burma. High hills stand behind it. Two broad, swift rivers flow round it and meet at the foot of the pagoda promontory. It is green and hilly. It has pleasant houses and shaded streets, and is liberally supplied with quaint old wooden monasteries, and ruined pagodas; while here and there a golden shrine raises its spire of bells amongst the palm trees.

I remained several days in Kalewa awaiting the steamer *Tiddim*, which should take me down the Chindwin to Monywa, and so back home to Pakokku. I occupied the berth in which the driller, whose exploits I have already described, committed suicide; though I was not told about it till the last day of the voyage.

in the gorges of the Pondaung hills, eight miles from the junction at Kalewa. These defiles are very lovely, and the rapids tumultuous and exciting. We had to walk for five miles as the water was low, and therefore very swift. The boat swept through the gorge and awaited us lower down. Here, the water still ran this way and that and boiled up in whirls, but the surface was flat, so that we could travel again by boat. This was lucky. We attributed it to our own good merit, accumulated the day before by buying some live fish from a fisherman and releasing them. But the Chindwin had something to say to it too, as it happened to be flooded, and so held up the water high enough in the Myittha to prevent more rapids. Indeed, I imagine Kalewa, which lies just where the two rivers meet, derives its name from the words *galé* (small), or *chaung-galé* (small river), and *wa* (to be filled)—a reference to the smaller river being filled by the larger.

Burmese derivations are more than usually interesting. The names of places often refer to some local peculiarity. Thus on this journey we travelled down the Myittha, or 'pleasant river.' We passed Kalemyo, derived from *galé* (small), and *myo* (a town). Chaungauk, where we spent a night, means 'winding river' only another form of *myit gwe* (river bend), from which Magwe on the Irrawaddy derives its name. Pakokku, I am told, was originally *Tha-htok-ku*, from *tha*, a son; *htok*, wrapped; and *ku*, a tomb: meaning 'the tomb of the wrapped son.' I do not know what

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There were 1,400 bags of paddy at Kalewa waiting to be loaded, and the *Tiddim* sat very low in the water when at last we got away. All up and down the river huge cargoes of paddy are loaded and discharged by men. But the bags are lifted from the ground by gangs of women, so that the men can run in and place their shoulders under the load without strain. The bags are lifted rapidly, almost thrown into the air for a continual stream of porters to carry away. In the first motion the women catch the bag. In the second they raise it waist-high, and in the third, shoulder-high. These three motions are accompanied by little songs which are amongst the familiar sounds of the river. Here are just a few :—

Hai, hai. La-ba leh. Tin peh meh.—Meaning: Hai, hai. Come along. We will lift.

Heh la kwe. Ba tha twe.—Meaning: Heh. Come. We will lift together.

Leh la so. Mo la so.—Meaning: Tell me. Is it wind or rain?

Sein win heh. Mya win heh.—Meaning: Is it a load of diamonds or emeralds?

At the first bend in the Chindwin, I regretfully saw the last of the Shwe Mokdaw Pagoda on the Kalewa promontory. Immediately in front of us lay the Pe-way one of the two celebrated Chindwin whirlpools. Now in October, there was scarcely an eddy upon it. It lay harmless and glassy under the winter sky. A large rock stands high out of the water in a reach where, in the

Rains, the eddies become most violent. There is a small white pagoda on it—now far above the river. But in flood the water boils up to its very base. Then the Pe-way whirlpool is a terrible thing. Boats skirt round it, but nothing could live in it; though it is on record that by some miraculous chance a small launch *was* once flung out again, after being sucked well in. I have mentioned that logs leap perpendicularly to the surface with a force which would drive them through any ship's bottom.

But to-day it lay very placid. All the morning we passed through hills. Jungle came down to the water. White pagodas stood on most of the spurs. Mountains of white cloud rose against the sky, and shone again on the burnished surface of the river, which in the evening caught all the splendour of sun-set. It was dusk when we tied up at Mauk-ha-daw. We lay under the village, where the spires of pagodas and monasteries stood silhouetted against the white sky.

Next morning we passed the Shwe Zai whirlpool, now at rest, like the Pe-way and in the evening came to Monywa. The town occupies a river-front of about a mile. It is well wooded, and the shore was crowded with Burmese boats with their maze of masts and rigging and richly carved sterns. On the following day we reached Pakokku. The heat was now all gone. So also the sad little garden round my house. It had long since been eaten up by bugs.

Winter was at hand. There are few climates more sunny and lovely than an Upper Burma winter. The sky was blue, like that of Italy. There was new brilliance in the sunshine. The Irrawaddy sparkled joyously under a cool breeze, and Mount Popbar where the *Nats* live seemed ever so near.

CHAPTER VIII.

Po Sein.

I AM roused from bed, weak and shaken, and told it is tea time. I feel thoroughly wretched and next-dayish. I have not been drinking, but nevertheless made a night of it, and came home this morning with the milk at 6 A.M. The fact is I have been to a *pwe*,[1] and a *pwe* is the most exhausting form of entertainment I ever struck. Being a busy man I cannot afford to be bowled out by it for more than one day. When a Burman goes to a *pwe*, he is incapacitated for three—the first day by the excitement of anticipation, the second by the excitement of getting there, and the third from exhaustion. The play goes on from 7 P.M. till dawn. But the trying part of it is that it is not worth watching till 2 A.M., when the star actors first come on. A theatre which only *begins* to be amusing at two o'clock in the morning is not a pleasure to be undertaken *lightly*. But it was impossible to resist the temptation of seeing Po Sein—Po Sein, the idol of Burmese play-lovers. So the effort had to be made.

Po Sein is to Burma what the Divine Sarah is to France—the spirit of drama. His success has been

[1] A Pwe is a Burmese play.

all the more remarkable, because he started as an ordinary poor village lad. He has never studied the arts in Europe. His singing, his acting, and, above all, his dancing is the fruit of his own brilliant imagination.

Po Sein was playing at Nyaung U, across the river from Pakokku, at the Shwezigon Pagoda festival. We went over in a launch. Hundreds of country boats were taking people to the *pice*. We had just time before dinner that evening to walk up to the pagoda. The whole road for two miles was lined with stalls, where people bought and fed and played *games of skill*. I caught a fleeting glimpse in a booth of that model of respectability, our Honorary Magistrate, Maung Galé, staking a pile of rupees at a table with true Burmese recklessness. There was an ever-shifting throng of people from all parts of the country. Beyond the crowded streets we passed between great lions, and into the quiet arcades which lead up to the pagoda. Here devout folk whispered their devotions and placed glittering candles all along the ledges of the pagoda's base. The great golden dome stood out against the night. The Shwezigon is an eleventh century building. Here Kyanzittha, the hero king of Burma, seized the regalia after the defeat and death of King Sáwlu. The pagoda also recalls the pathetic history of Manuha, the unfortunate king of Thaton, who was brought to Pugan a captive by Anawratta. Here, in this court of the Shwezigon, water was poured over his hands, and he was dedicated a slave to the pagoda.

Before dawn a flash of light would enter the shrine from Heaven. We might all have seen it, had not Po Sein and his *pwe* been of much greater importance.

All these candles, and the crowds, and the moonlight might easily have evoked a feeling of romance, had romance not been effectually routed by an awful and overwhelming stench, pervading the whole of Nyaung U. Take ten thousand people: multiply them by three days, and eliminate all conservancy arrangements, and you have a pretty little problem, *which if correctly solved gives the answer—cholera.* We staggered home, handkerchief to nose, till we breathed again the sweet, fresh night air of the Irrawaddy.

The candles and laughter are only one aspect of a festival. But it has its backstairs too, where a few worried officials contend with superhuman problems of sanitation. The unseen hand of vengeance and justice is also abroad through the happy crowd, detaining and deporting professional pick-pockets and recognising miscreants from all the surrounding districts. The "wanted" are often brought to book at such places.

* * * * *

We dined early and then tried to sleep. A little sleep was most necessary, and for that very reason refused to come. We intended to start out at 2 A. M. but were persuaded, against our better judgment, by an enthusiast to go much earlier. So we came in

for the end of a flickering cinema. Presently the *Woons*, or Ministers, arrived. The audience had apparently experienced *Woons* before, and their appearance was a signal for every one to lie down and sleep it out. Mercifully we had long chairs. The last I remember of the *Woons* was that they were saying "*paya, paya, paya, paya*"[1] about a million times.

I woke with an audible snort. They were rousing me to enquire on Po Sein's behalf how I was enjoying myself. I felt guilty at being thus found asleep, for I was a guest. *Po Sein does not charge Englishmen for their seats!*

when he gives away his splendid silks right and left. He works his people hard. The clown, as soon as his part is over, goes back to his electric motor, the minister to his scene shifting. He pays his female artistes well. The *Minthamee*, or Princess, gets Rs. 300 a month. But a clever, celebrated clown like Maung Ngwe Hnin only draws a salary of Rs. 90. The chorus girls get from Rs. 40 to Rs. 175, according to their ability. Po Sein feeds them all well and gives them new dresses thrice a year. He supports them when they can no longer work. Amongst his pensioners is a famous actor, who once played *Minthamee* to him, but who is now the victim of leprosy. These two were boys together. Many institutions are indebted to Po Sein's generosity, and in 1915 he collected large "gates" for war charities. So I too bowed down and worshipped Po Sein, and took my place in the train of his many admirers. You knew instinctively that he was a man of resource, imagination, and organisation. You felt that it was *he* who was the current which shed a blaze of electricity over the silent waters of the Irrawaddy, that *he* was the prop supporting this great canvas theatre which had cost Rs. 9,000, and which now accommodated an audience of five thousand people. *He* was the spirit of dancing and fun which kept all this host amused for hours.

One secret of his success is the care he takes over his make-up. The fillet about his head was arranged again and again until it stuck out to his entire satisfaction.

His white coat was fresh and starched. His costly brocade *putso*, or skirt, was ironed out anew. He looked very inch his part of a prince.

Po Sein did not come on till 2 A.M. The audience woke up then as if by magic. He sang, he joked. He danced with marvellous grace, his voluminous silks tucked up round him. He invited us to put our chairs in the wings so that we could see and hear everything. This play, which was called the *Padeh Kayah Shwe Ainzee*, was full of incident and vivacity. The acting was good. A stream of puns and jokes kept the audience in roars. Very few Englishmen ever know sufficient Burmese to follow these clowns, or *lubyets*, as they are called. Their puns are said to be very shocking. The Buddhist Association frowns whenever it thinks about them. But they must be awfully funny. I wish to goodness I understood them!

There were long periods when Po Sein stood about the stage with nothing to do. It was interesting to see how thoroughly natural he was, how he busied himself smoothing his dress or his hair, and how occasionally he shot a glance of frank approval at some original joke. The actors themselves were often in fits of genuine laughter, which was extraordinarily infectious, even when (for me) the whole significance of the jest was lost.

So they danced and laughed and sang the *Padeh Kayah*, until the stars paled and "Dawn's left hand was in the sky." Po Sein's dancing was a revelation. As the night wore on he surpassed himself. He moved

with utmost vigour, utmost grace, light as a feather, and with all those queer little twists and postures of the hands which are peculiar to Burmese dancing.[1]

When at last it was all finished the sun was nearly up. We hurried to the launch and pushed off quickly before it could be entirely swamped by the tide of returning humanity. From a little distance we could send a dingey to pick off friends from the crowd. Maung Galé and his wife amongst others were thus rescued from the bank. Maung Galé looked dissipated and glum. He might have passed for anything at that moment but a respectable honorary magistrate. His small ventures at *games of skill* had failed dismally. He hadn't a cent left on his person, and he had borrowed his wife's last rupee. She, poor woman, declared she could not even have paidt heir way home, had we not rescued them. Later on, however, she unfortunately dropped her purse. It fell on the hard deck with a thud, suggesting that fortune had not been so very unkind to her after all. I saw in her husband's eye that which demanded an explanation at home. I bet the honours were pretty well divided.

[1] Po Sein has since received recognition by Government and has been awarded the 'Certificate of Honour and Gold Medal.'

CHAPTER IX.

About Hamadryads and Some Other Matters.

"And just at that moment the tiger came out of the jungle, and was shot by the Colonel."

Tall Stories.

The litter of paper and straw throughout the house indicates transfer. Experience has taught me to expect a move about once a quarter in civil employ. This time, however, it is welcome. Pakokku is bare and brown and beastly. I am cut by half the station for the sole reason that I don't cut the other half. I am sick of these bickerings. The club stinks of bats. I shall be glad to go, and therefore the packing is pressed forward urgently, so that we can get away to-morrow night by the steamer *India*. The dining table is piled up with crockery and glass, which only I am entrusted to pack, with much saw-dust and advice. The crockery box has just been brought over to me, and a long-drawn "*th-hiss*," indicates the fact that a hamadryad has taken up his abode in it and is prepared to dispute possession. I have a holy terror of all snakes, but hamadryads have become my pet abomination since I came to Pakokku. I recall the unpleasant fact that hamadryads are the only snakes that positively attack a man at sight, and that this one has without a doubt



A Hamadryad.

been severely aggravated. A small one, a mere baby of six or seven feet, on far less provocation, turned the house opposite upside down last week, before it was killed by men with the very longest available poles. My hand has already been inside that crockery box. I shudder to think how near I have been to DEATH, spelt in capital letters. There is a flash of black and yellow over the lid of the box.

* * * * *

Before I had meditated thus far, the orderly had leapt clear of the box with an agility that was surprising. I myself have already taken up a strategic position on the table amongst the soup tureens, from where, like a wise general, I can direct operations without unduly exposing myself. Besides, on this table there is plenty of ammunition handy.

By now the dogs have rushed into the danger zone and are greatly aggravating an already delicate situation. The infuriated reptile is waving an expanded hood and two feet of black and yellow coils above the box. I would throw the salad bowl at the evil, hideous thing, only I don't much like to attract its attention. It might begin to attack! Besides, my retreat is rather blocked by a gibbering crowd of servants who wave curtain poles from the door.

They say a drowning man reviews his whole life in a moment. I can quite believe it. Face to face with that inflated hood and those wicked jaws, I recall in an instant all I ever knew of the natural history of

hamadryads. I have heard—and now I know it—that the hamadryad has big teeth. He gives a tremendous bite, with a downward drag. He opens his mouth like a yawning cave. He stands four feet high. Another eight feet of him lie coiled in the box. And this is only a little one! I have seen bigger ones brought round by snake-charmers. But the snake-charmers were always there to pull them back by the tail when they came too close. Now there are no snake-charmers!

I dislike snake-charmers almost as much as I do snakes. The ones I am thinking of were women. They had thin, tight lips, and beady eyes, and a horrid cold smile. They say masters grow like their dogs. My *Subadar* is just like his. So I suppose these women had grown like their snakes. I saw them at Pugan, where they performed before Sir George Shaw, when he acted as Lieutenant-Governor. They had six hamadryads which they had caught on Mount Popbar. Hamadryads do not thrive in captivity, and I believe the charmers let them go after a time. When I saw those hamadryads I really could hardly believe they were cobras, and not some kind of large python. They were all *fourteen feet long*. Imagine a cobra fourteen feet long, with a hood like a soup-plate, to match! They all differed completely in colour. Some were almost olive green, and others—the most terrible to look at—were jet-black, with broad yellow bands.

Pakokku is celebrated for one hamadryad, which took up its quarters under a culvert beside the

high road. Certain people seemed to infuriate it more than others, and it deliberately singled out its victims from amongst the passers-by and killed at least two. Then it was classed as a panther for purposes of reward, and so some Burmans very soon came and killed it.

A man I met saw a hamadryad take a dust bath in the road. It swirled itself round rapidly, and thus raised a small dust devil.

From time to time there is a furious controversy in the Burmese papers on the subject of snake-poison antidotes. Several cures have been put forward, supported by cases of successful treatment; but they are promptly torn to shreds by equally convincing critics. At any rate, the chemicals of which the antidotes are made are so obscure that one cannot easily buy them. I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that there is only one real cure. It is not the anti-venom in our hospital—for that I know is about two and-a-half years old, and probably quite useless by now. It is not the permanganate lancet on which I once pinned my faith. It is a cure so secret that it is known to none but a few snake-charmers, and no one has yet had the enterprise to wheedle it from them. Probably, if it is ever revealed, it will prove to be some ridiculously simple herb. Nature usually supplies a handy antidote to all poisons. A doctor, who does not yet know the nature of this cure, described to me the following remarkable experiment, which was made before him here in

Pakokku by some snake-charmers, while they and thei stock-in-trade were stopping a few days in the hospita compound. Three chickens were produced which wer bitten one after another in quick succession by a snake The first chicken, which of course received the bull of the poison, was handed to the snake-charmers fo treatment. The second was given to the doctor The third, which had received the least poison of all was left alone. This experiment was repeated thre separate times. The chickens treated by the charmer lived every time. Two of the doctor's chickens died and one lived. All the untreated chickens died in a few minutes.

As a climax, a fresh snake was produced which bi a dog. The dog died within ten minutes. Shortly afterwards a charmer allowed the same snake to bit him. Even allowing that most of the venom had beer exhausted on the dog, the charmers must still have ha absolute faith in their antidote. Surely, the secret o that antidote could be bought for a hundred pounds, a thousand, or even ten thousand pounds, and would b cheap at the price.

These charmers come to Pakokku every year. I sincerely wish they were here now. They would, I an sure, delight in ridding me of the horror which stil sways before me. Mercifully this snake seems to hav forgotten that all self-respecting hamadryads attack o sight. With a blood-freezing "hiss-s-s" the soup plate hood suddenly collapses and disappears into th

depths of the box. Instantly the lid is slammed down, and a crowd of servants hold it shut with all their weight, lest the occupant rise from it again, like a jack-in-the-box.

There remains considerable doubt as to who really slew that hamadryad. Several people claim the honour. Personally I think I killed it, by blazing six rounds of number four shot through the wood work. Anyhow, one way and another, the snake was completely shattered. So are my nerves. So is the box. Ah Shak, the Chinaman who makes crates, cupboards, and coffins for the Europeans of Pakokku, will have to knock up another box before I can get on with the crockery.

Of course there is no reason why you should believe all this. If the hamadryad business sounds a bit too thick, savours in fact too much of Burmese tall talk about dacoit *Bo's*, and swarming leeches, you should not strain your credulity. Believe only just what you like in this book. You are under no obligation to read on to the end. But I hope you will, for there are yet many miles left, and I like my travelling companions to go with me all the way.

Pakokku has heaps of Russel's vipers. They are not half so theatrical as a hamadryad. They are sluggish. They cannot strike much higher than a man's ankle. They are said to be quite deaf, and so do not move until touched. Then, in a second, all the sluggishness is gone, and they whip round like lightning. Their bite is absolutely deadly, and Ah-

Shak can begin measurements within fifty minutes. I know all this, because last week at Pauk I got out of bed, put on only slippers, and went downstairs into the garden. There was a Russel's viper lying along the lowest step, and I trod within half an inch of him. After a record long jump I retired upstairs to compose myself with a cigarette. Almost immediately, a mad dog came up the backstairs, ran through the house, and out on to one of the shutters which, to afford ventilation, let downwards to the level of the floor. The rope luckily broke, and the dog dropped out of the house as through a trap door. His exit was really rather ludicrous, but I had had enough of this sort of fun. I ordered the ponies and left Pauk hurriedly.

I have since inspected the anti-venom serums in the hospital. They came into this world with Adam. The moulding old corks are as old as the hills—perhaps even older. However, there is a full blown Hospital Assistant here who has considerable success with *mantras*. I saw him thus cure a scorpion sting. The poison had already reached the glands of the patient's armpits. It was recalled from armpit to elbow, and from the elbow back to the finger tip, where the wound lay. The patient was quite satisfied as to the withdrawal of the pain, which was now dispersed into the air with many *abra-ka-dabras*. Last of all, ordinary hospital medicines were applied.

If orientals know of antidotes for snake venom it shows extraordinary want of enterprise on the part of the

medical profession not to have discovered what they are. The Burmese certainly believe they have an antidote for hydrophobia. It is called *Padaing Myit*, and is the powdered root of the *Padaing Pin*, or Padaing tree. It is made up into sugar balls and given to the patient. He is placed in an absolutely empty room, and a pill is administered once an hour. After about five hours he shows all the signs of rabies, gurgling, frothing, and flinging himself about for perhaps a day, after which he gradually comes to himself. He is then kept very quiet for some days, and is considered cured. A friend of mine once saw this treatment tried on a boy of eleven years old. What I have written above is what he described.

Later on, he and I asked a Burman to show us a Padaing tree. He did so, and volunteered the information, without any hint from us, that people who eat its fruit go mad. Thus apparently the madness produced by the tree counteracts the madness of the rabies.

* * * * *

The Burmese suffer from one or two peculiar diseases. One they call *Tet-deh*. It is a sort of epileptic fit, such as Ma Shwe Chyok had on the steamer at Salé. These fits are sometimes fatal. Another is called *A-Hnior-mee-deh*, during which the Burmese greatly fear the smell of cooked oil or of fish cooked in oil. If this smell reaches

them, they undoubtedly get much worse; and seizing their noses, do their best to avoid it.

I feel that your credulity has been considerably taxed in this Chapter. Of course, I myself believe all I have written, but I do not expect you to. Do you remember a few lines by Tom Moore :—

> Good reader, if you e'er have seen,
> When Phœbus hastens to his pillow,
> The mermaids, with their tresses green
> Dancing upon the western billow:
> If you have seen all this, and more,
> God bless me! what a deal you've seen!

* * * * *

But there are tragedies occurring in my house and garden which outdistance even the horror of hamadryads. There is a big brown and yellow hornet building little mud cells all over the house. One has a well advanced fortification in the binding of a favourite book on my table. This has led me to watch her closer with a view to reprisal. After laying the egg and building a cell, she catches caterpillars and walls them up along with the grub. They are alive, but numb; and I have since read that they are stung in each joint of their bodies. They will remain thus in torment for weeks, and then be eaten alive slowly, starting from the tail end, when the grub wakes up.

Yesterday, a big fat caterpillar was crossing the path when a fly attacked it, pouncing on it at intervals like a hawk. Evidently he gave a shrewd nip each

time, for the helpless caterpillar stopped, reared up, and tried to face its tormentor. Eventually I drove the fly away, and the caterpillar, as soon as it reached the cover of grass, scratched its wounds with its short legs in the most ridiculous way. But now I know the tragedy that has occurred. In the moment of stinging, that fly also laid an egg. The caterpillar will go and make his chrysalis. It will also be his slaughter-house, for the egg he harbours will hatch, and he will become its living prey.

I have always regarded the mantis with friendship. He comes along and *shikoes* and does no harm. Yet the female tears her mate to bits in the moment of his embrace.

God provides worms for the dicky birds, so I was taught as a child; but till now I have never thought about it from the worm's point of view. It is a big subject, I can quite see.

Long ago there were holy men who understood the language of animals, so Maung Po Myit says. But now there is no one who knows their talk.

CHAPTER X.

The North-East Frontier.

Myitkyina.[1]

Soon after I left it, Pakokku was destroyed by fire. A wall of flame, driven by a strong wind, tore its way through the town from end to end, consuming along with everything else many beautiful old monasteries and pagodas. This is how a Burmese friend described it to me in his letter :—

"Pakokku was burnt on the 9th day of waning of the month of *Ta-baung* 1277 (27th March, 1916). The conflagration was immense. The bazaar was utterly destroyed. The following quarters of the town were also burnt out :—*Phaung-Laung-Shin* (Raft of the Embryo Lord); *Ba-Bey-Taik* (Blacksmith's shop); *Nau-Chee-Goan* (Cow-dung mound); and *Moan-Nyin-Zu* (the *Moan-Nyin* bean quarter).

To the south of the *Kote-Thein-Na-Yone* quarter, the monastery and pagoda became enveloped in a ball of fire and were destroyed.

The *Phaung-Daw-Oo Paya* (Pagoda of the Prow of the Royal Raft), the *Min Kyaung* (King's Monastery),

[1] *Myit-chee-na*, 'near the big river.' By Europeans the word is pronounced *Michee-nawa*.

and the *Chauk-Zedi* Pagoda and Monastery as well as the whole of our town, have fallen in ashes. No former fire was ever so terrible as this one. Animals were burnt. The people were homeless, and mothers sought their children weeping. But there was not much loss of life. One *Phoongyi* (monk) was burnt and *flew away* (died). I trust his bones will be befittingly handed over to us. There has been great loss of property, including the ground-nut crop, which had been stored in the houses. People had no time to save anything. Pakokku was burnt as the sun was slanting down, and by night the main town was done for. Ninety brick houses were destroyed, and the telegraph line interrupted. At first there was distress as the people had no place to go to, and nothing left to eat.

Also the *Shwe Ku Gyee Pagoda*—the Great Golden Cave, with its images and carving, has been lost. It is a great pity."

It is strange how small the incidents are which lead to bigger ones. Being cut out at Bridge, I wandered down to the mail steamer lying off Pakokku. The D.I.G.[1] of Military Police happened to be on board. I called and stopped on board to dine. Big secret things were happening up on the Myitkyina Frontier. I longed to go there, and pointed out how hot and dull and generally damnable Pakokku was; and as a result I received orders a week later to proceed. As I read the wire, my

[1] Deputy Inspector-General.

tucktoo ran down the wall to the lamp, and called *tau-teh* ten times lustily. So I knew it was alright, and his omen good. It was unselfish of him too, for no one took my house for months, and his lamp was never lit for him again to catch flies at. I am afraid he fell on evil times, poor old fellow. I felt quite sorry to leave the house all dark and lonesome in the moonlight, when at last I rode away down to the steamer.

I went up to Sagaing in the cargo steamer *India*. She was an ex-mail boat and most luxuriously fitted. They don't give accommodation like that now. I had her all to myself and thoroughly enjoyed the quiet, lazy voyage. I shall describe Sagaing elsewhere. The railway which takes you north from there is called contemptuously the "Myitkyina Mail." It is the worst railway you can possibly imagine. You pass slowly out of the real Burma. The pagodas fall behind. Later on, the peasant folk in the rice-fields are Shans and Shan-Chinese, and not Burmese any more. You dine at Shwebo. There is nowhere to breakfast; and if you don't happen to know about *that*, you live on patience and coarse bananas till late the next evening. With a final triumphant sprint you arrive at least two hours late. I have even known the train to be 13 hours late. Myitkyina lies before you. The Military Police lines, the Circuit House, the runaway elephant, the Club. You have probed all its mysteries from the train at a glance. There is nothing more behind. The guard, who has also been *all* the coolies

petty *Duwa*[1] or *Sawbwa*[2], or to hold up an invasion till help can come. It split itself in two like a polypus, to form the Putao Battalion in 1914, and within six months was sending its commandant and scores of its men to die in France and the Dardanelles. It has guns and mounted infantry and pioneers, and really quite a remarkable signalling establishment. It is instructive to watch the Myitkyina "central station" on a fine day in the "open season," when innumerable helios wink at it from all directions—for there are posts in all those high encircling hills, to say nothing of officers on tour, and columns and survey parties wandering forth, all connected by helio with the base at Myitkyina a hundred or so miles away. Messages to my future post at Htawgaw travelled 130 miles, through five stations. The messages were easy reading till the war began, after which Russian names seemed to demoralize the signallers. In those days we got daily war helios; but in the Rains, and when the villagers began to burn their jungles and to fill the air with smoke, the stations were all closed down.

There was no lack of employment on this my first arrival. On the contrary, there was feverish work from dawn to dusk, for a new Battalion was about to

[1] *Duwa* is a Kachin name for Chief. It is used like the word *Sahib* in India, and *Thakin* in Burma.

[2] *Sawbwa* is Shan for Chief. It is correctly pronounced *Sau-hpa*, meaning *Sau* a lord: and *hpa* heaven—The Lord of Heaven.

at *all* the stations, looks an older, sadder man than when he left Sagaing. He gives you to understand how lucky you are to arrive at all. You might have been infinitely later and more hungry; or you might even have been charged by elephants.

On arrival I was hospitably put up by Major Moule, the Battalion Commandant, whose unhappy fate it was to die two years later between the British and German trenches, where I believe his body could not be recovered. He was one of the straightest fellows I ever knew, and the military police lost in him a very gallant officer.

Myitkyina has its charm, and many people find it. I never cared much for the place itself. But that was not Myitkyina's fault. In the 18 months during which it was my head-quarters, I lived in it only 35 days. My visits were associated with sleeping on the floor, and shaving off the mantel-piece. My work lay in the outposts.

The Myitkyina Battalion of Military Police is really rather a wonderful machine. It dominates an immense piece of country, much of which is mountainous and adjacent to Yünnan. Its chief outposts are Sadon, Sima, Htawgâw, and Hpimaw, and in winter Kamaign, but there are many others subsidiary to these. It is composed of Gurkhas, Dogras, and Kachins, held together by a few British Officers. Its men are taught to go ten miles by rail or six months by road on no notice and less fuss. It is equally ready to suppress a

petty *Duwa*[1] or *Sawbwa*[2], or to hold up an invasion till help can come. It split itself in two like a polypus, to form the Putao Battalion in 1914, and within six months was sending its commandant and scores of its men to die in France and the Dardanelles. It has guns and mounted infantry and pioneers, and really quite a remarkable signalling establishment. It is instructive to watch the Myitkyina "central station" on a fine day in the "open season," when innumerable helios wink at it from all directions—for there are posts in all those high encircling hills, to say nothing of officers on tour, and columns and survey parties wandering forth, all connected by helio with the base at Myitkyina a hundred or so miles away. Messages to my future post at Htawgaw travelled 130 miles, through five stations. The messages were easy reading till the war began, after which Russian names seemed to demoralize the signallers. In those days we got daily war helios; but in the Rains, and when the villagers began to burn their jungles and to fill the air with smoke, the stations were all closed down.

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be born, whose duty it would be to take over and hold the new district of Putao, or Hkampti Long. Gradual Chinese aggression had made it necessary to take over those wild valleys in the north, and to make the Irrawaddy-Salween divide the frontier in fact as well as in theory. I was attached to this new Battalion till it was safely launched, and then transferred to the Myitkyina Battalion.

I have served most of my time on frontiers—but I shall not easily forget the sensation of helplessness I first experienced on this North-Eastern Frontier. It was all so strange, so utterly unlike any other work. Men spoke in at least eight different languages. The transport was all Chinese. It never seemed to exist except on paper; and never obeyed orders even when it did materialize. I had yet to learn that this was the most handy, most easily managed transport in all the East. Sepoys for the new Battalion came from all the Battalions of Burma which had Gurkhas; and they shifted in their companies like glass in a kaleidoscope. It made you giddy. Equipment was snatched from anywhere. There was no motherly staff to provide the ingredients of the bottle. Supplies, as far as I recollect, consisted chiefly of treacle and wire. I understood the treacle was for horses. The army of occupation was to march by road, as soon as sanction came; but neither road nor sanction were yet provided. It was to march in four columns with intervals of a few days, and the road was to follow on behind a few months later, or as

soon as a Pioneer Regiment could carry it through. But the telegraph marched with the troops, cutting a lane through the jungle, and hitching its wire to trees as it went.

It was a wonderful affair and a considerable eye-opener. Such methods would have been unsuitable on the North-West Frontier, but they meant success here—so widely different are the conditions. The enterprise *was* a success. The miles of transport, the guns, the elephants, the treasury safes, the treacle, and the wire all got through safe enough before the transport broke down. It *did* break down in the end, and necessary supplies were only forced through with great difficulty—but by then the Putao Battalion had been safely launched.

In those early days of its childhood my principal work was at N'Sop Zup, which was an advanced depôt. There, I had to make up transport trains of a thousand to twelve hundred mules, ready for each column as it came through. N'Sop is about 30 miles from Myitkyina. The first section of the journey was by launch to Wataugyi. Thence I rode if there were ponies. Sometimes there were none, and I was often benighted in the dense jungle. It was now December, and bitterly cold, even in a sleeping bag. The track—it was then only a mere footpath—lay along the right bank of the Mali Hka, which, together with its sister river the N'Mai Hka, forms the head waters of the Irrawaddy. The Kachin word *Hka* means river. I sometimes made the return

journey by river, in a dugout. It was a wonderful experience, for in one place there are two miles of rapids, down which we hurtled with incredible force. Both the N'Mai and Mali have rocky beds, and many rapids. There is a little strip of white sand along the water's edge, and then the hills and jungle rise straight up. A little above Wataugyi these two rivers unite to form the Irrawaddy. The junction is imposing amongst a mass of rocky reefs.

N'Sop soon became a post. Barracks and rest huts were rigged up out of bamboo. This is bamboo country. Everything is made of bamboo, from a garter to a house, from a kettle to a bridge. So far as the houses go, I cannot praise them. They are built rapidly, and that is their only recommendation. The sliding doors soon cease to slide; the legs of chairs and beds are always working through the floor. If you rise to get a match, you upset some one's drink three rooms off; and if *you* are writing *he* jogs you every time he sponges himself. But still I look back to N'Sop with pleasure. The jungle was so wonderful; the Mali Hka so stately, both in its placid and its violent moods. Across the river lay the unknown. We call it the "Triangle," because it lies in the triangle between the N'Mai and Mali Hka rivers. Nominally it is ours. In fact we never interfere with it, and it is unadministered. The natives call this triangle of country "Sinloong." It is inhabited by Kachins, Marus, and Lashis, who enjoy their feuds and slaves unmolested,

so long as they confine themselves between their two rivers. They grow tea and make gunpowder. Chinese traders sometimes penetrate, but there are no bridges as the rivers are too broad. Animals cannot swim across, because the water is too swift. Bamboo rafts are kept at certain points, but there is constant danger from *Barengs*. These are water-serpent Nats, who drag men from rafts and eat their livers. So for one reason and another the Sinloong remains isolated.

In the forests of N'Sop Zup, the monkeys whooped and cooed. Their calling was a sound one soon associated with one's early morning cup of tea. We were out all those short, cold, sunny days. It was too chilly to move until 9 o'clock. The sunshine when it warmed was exhilarating. I can never sufficiently praise the beauty of winter in Upper Burma. In the evening we sat in *poshteens*[1] over a fire. It was quite dark by 5-15 P.M. in this narrow valley.

Christmas came, and with it the second of the columns. It was found to carry plum-pudding and champagne, as well as barbed wire. Next day it marched away at 10 o'clock, with the twelve hundred mules I had collected and loaded for it. N'Sop was left very quiet. In the intervals between columns I used to lie reading all day on a sunny strip of sand beside the stream where also Tsau Nong, my Kachin orderly, came and taught me his language of *Chingpaw*.

[1] An Afghan sheep-skin coat.

N'Sop was left very dirty. Armies of sepoys and muleteers, and four thousand mules, had defiled it beyond description. I began to shout for sweepers. But Headquarters said "buy pigs." So I learnt what pigs are used for on the North-East Frontier.

N'Sop Zup, as the word *zup* explains, is the confluence of two rivers—the N'Sop and the Mali Hka. The N'Sop is a pretty little stream full of deep pools. The telegraph clerks caught a twenty pound mahseer one day by throwing dough mixed with lumps of dynamite into a likely place. The dynamite stupefies the fish for about five minutes, when he can be caught as he flounders about at the surface. The Kachins make up a poison of walnut leaves with which they kill and take fish. They call it *N'bu ru*. There is magnificent fishing in these rivers. The record posted up in Myitkyina club, along with some mahseers' jaws, is astonishing.

By the time that the last column had gone, I really knew something about Chinese transport. It has organised itself under big contractors who discover what transport Government will require for the following "open season," and who make the contracts. In about the end of October, when the Rains and the *surra* have ceased, the animals begin to arrive from the highlands of Yünnan where they have grazed. They are divided into trains of three or four hundred, each under its lieutenant, or *Laubang*. They are further divided into



A *Loubang*—The Chief of a Mule Train.



Chinese Muleteers.

parties of eight to twelve mules, with the two or three muleteers who own and tend them. This is the smallest unit in which they can, or will, work. The muleteer looks for orders to his *Laubang*, and the *Laubang* to the contractor. They acknowledge no other authority. Consequently it is essential to work through the *Laubangs*. To give orders direct to a muleteer is sheer waste of breath. He pays no attention.

There is a right and a wrong way of distributing loads for military purposes, where some sort of order and precision is required. The wrong way is to lay all the saddles in neat rows, and then give each Chinaman what he is to carry. In this way weak mules are given heavy loads, and strong mules light ones. The muleteer sees other loads which he prefers, and jettisons those you give him as soon as you are gone. He will do the same if you try and split his mules up so that they march separately. His unit is not capable of subdivision, and he quite rightly will not allow his mules to march except under his own personal charge.

The right way is to lay out the *loads* on the ground (if possible overnight) in the order of march, and then to allot them through the *Laubang*—ten loads to the owner of ten mules, eighteen to the owner of eighteen. He looks at them, weighs them, swaps them round to suit each individual beast, and at his leisure ties them up. Next morning each load is raised as its time comes to start. The mule ducks under it. It

is dropped on to his back, and away he goes. There is no standing about loaded, no waiting. The column moves away mule by mule, rapidly without delays or gaps. You have no further concern with it. Chinese transport loads itself, feeds itself, doctors itself, and generally knows more about itself and how to look after itself than you do. It hates starting too early, and it likes a midday halt, for the muleteers gorge themselves thrice daily on huge portions of rice and pork. After the evening meal they begin to "coo" seductively, and the mules rush into camp from the jungle to thrust their mouths into nose bags. The response next morning at loading time is a good deal less enthusiastic. In Burma, animals never get wheat or gram as in India, but always paddy. All night long Chinese mules run loose and graze, and return in the morning with the great advantage over Government mules of a full stomach. If these peculiarities are studied and if nagging and abuse are avoided, there is nothing easier to work with than Chinese transport. It pegs along steadily all day. Its muleteers in blue clothes and large round straw hats are cheery and friendly. Sunshine or rain, there is no complaint though they may lie down for a week on end in water. One is filled with admiration at their pluck, endurance, and resource. They ask for no help and they expect none; and they take the loss of animals from accident, theft, or straying with wonderful composure. They come and report. That is all.



CHAU SHEH CHWEN AND THE CRATE OF A CHINESE SADDLE.



LING AND CHAU SHEH CHWEN.

They have very few belongings, which gives them yet another advantage over a *drabi*,[1] who usually needs a whole mule out of four for himself and the paddy. These Chinamen have just a thick white *numbna*, or woollen carpet. It is very warm and also waterproof. They own besides a pair of chop-sticks, an opium outfit, a handsome metal pipe, and a few little china cups for rice. The gang is usually accompanied by dogs. They are black or red and very much like the *Chow*, with thick coats and twisted tails. They are said really to be Yawyin hunting dogs and are usually too fierce to make pets of. However, I got a puppy at the *Feng Shwi Ling* pass near Hpimaw, and called him *Ling* after the name of the pass. He has done very well. He started life by shrieking the house down by night, and being very lovable by day. When he grew up he was hopelessly independent and disobedient, but always affectionate.

The Chinese transport saddle is another marvel. There is a stool or crate on legs. To this the loads are bound with leather thongs. The complicated knot is easy enough to learn but easier still to forget again. It is wonderfully effective. Loads once tied on will not work loose for days; and consequently Chinese transport is most suitable for "through convoy" work, where the loads have not to be untied every night. There is a saddle on the mule's back,

[1] An Indian muleteer of Government transport.

into which the loaded crate fits by means of wooden ridges. Crates and saddles are not interchangeable, and only Heaven and the muleteers know which crate sits on which saddle. There are no girths—and consequently no girth galls. The load rides entirely by balance. It is kept from slipping backwards or forwards on hilly roads by a breast band and tail piece. The tail piece has round wooden rollers strung along it, to save it from rubbing. Most of the sores occur either at the tail or over the withers.

There is a difference of opinion as to whether Government or Chinese transport loads up quickest. Perhaps Government transport does—but we all know how it exhausts itself by standing about loaded for perhaps an hour before it starts, and how the loads work loose after it *has* started. In other respects there is no comparison. The Chinaman is a born muleteer and the *drabi* is decidedly not. The operations the Chinese perform are wonderful. They probe into deep abscesses, and yet manage to keep their animals in work at the same time. For simple colic, they blow the smoke of a burning rag up the mule's nose. It causes a free discharge. In acute cases of stricture, they sometimes stab with a hollow bamboo into the bladder. It is a drastic operation, but occasionally successful. It is often impossible to guess what they hope to effect; but their prescriptions must always be treated with respect, even when they spit on an open sore, poke pepper into a mule's eye, or stuff a live chicken into its mouth for staggers.

The question arises, can Chinese transport be relied upon in operations against China. My opinion is that it can. Chinese transport took Hpimaw, after the Government's mule corps had left its bones all up the Valley of Death. Chinese transport also took Hkampti Long. The Chinese muleteers fear nothing except *surra*. As soon as the *surra* season comes round in April, they trek back to Yünnan, and nothing will induce them to stop.

* * * * *

Putao is inhabited by Kachins, Lisus, and Shans. The Shans are an isolated branch of their race, and have consequently been continually oppressed by their neighbours. They warmly welcomed our occupation, which offered relief from the bullying of their immediate neighbours and from the more distant attentions of the Chinese. Their chief anxiety was with reference to their slaves, who, they say, are as necessary to them as their "legs and arms." They were given to understand that there would be no immediate interference, except in the case of slaves actually seeking release. Such a slave, the first to claim protection of the British Flag, fled into N'Sop hotly pursued by his master. He had been drugged and carried off as a child and had changed hands several times since, once in exchange for a cow, and once as part of a bride's trousseau. He had worked in the fields. He was given food, but had to find his own

CHINESE TRANSPORT.

In suit of blue, with yellow skin,
A big moon-hat tied 'neath his chin,
Straight from the borders of Yünnan
There comes a Chinese pony man.
His face a mask—yet once a while,
It lights up with a jolly smile.

Thousands of Chinese ponies are
Hired each year by the *Sirkar*.[1]
The Chinaman his contract fills
Along the Burmese frontier hills.
No muleteer is better than
This self-reliant Chinaman.

There's no romance in humping loads
On broken, muddy, forest roads:
Or wading torrents deep and strong,
Or shifting saddles all day long.
Yet "*Zjin-nee-ma*" he cries, and all
The ponies know his wild-cat call.

'Tis no romance to lose your wage
In gambling when you reach the stage:
To sleep out on the open plain
Exposed to cold and wind and rain.
He won't complain; I think we can
A *hero*, call John Chinaman.

clothing. He wisely turned a deaf ear to the blandishments of his master and eventually accompanied me down to Myitkyina.

Hkampti Long, which I never saw, is said to be open, healthy, fertile, and beautiful. The name is supposed to mean "Gold land." *Hlam* is the Shan for 'gold'; and *tee* might mean 'place of.' But the derivation does not seem very clear. The language of the Hkampti Shans is now corrupt from long isolation from the main Shan tribes. There is said to be gold in the hills, which the simple folk are eager to swap for beads and Odol bottles. Vast hoards of beads were therefore taken up, particularly light-blue ones, which were said to be in great demand. How long the bead trade prospered in Hkampti I do not know, but it was unfortunately as dead as mutton by the time I got up to Htawgaw two months later. There was a time when the natives smelt a two anna bit and returned it. They do that still, but now want a rupee instead. In Ahkyang, the coinage appeared to be as follows:—Half a pound of a medicinal herb called *Hman* equals a fowl: six fowls equal a *dhar*: a good *dhar* equals a medium pig: a few pigs equal a girl, the exact number depending on the pigs and the girl. Girls, it was thought, might even be purchased direct with beads. The future lords of Hkampti Long went up full of hope.

CHINESE TRANSPORT.

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A big moon-hat tied 'neath his chin,
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There comes a Chinese pony man.
His face a mask—yet once a while,
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'Tis no romance to lose your wage
In gambling when you reach the stage:
To sleep out on the open plain
Exposed to cold and wind and rain.
He won't complain; I think we can
A *hero*, call John Chinaman.

An early start he thinks unwise.
Marching at ten you'll recognise
A suit of blue, a yellow skin,
A big moon-hat tied 'neath his chin.
It's not the slightest use to damn
This quiet, stolid Chinaman.

[1] Government.

Last night you summoned the *Laubung*[1]
And saw the loads all neatly strung
On wooden saddles; and explained
Your orders. All was well arranged.
Kits, rations, Chinese-rice laid right,
After a fierce and wordy fight.

But disregarding your harangues,
The Chinese move along by gangs.
Your ordered march is fast dissolved,
In grand confusion soon involved.
Your transport mules now onward stream
Chaotic, like an evil dream.

But man and beast will plod all day;
By hill and stream they wend their way.
At night they'll reach the halting place,
And you will bless the grinning face,
The suit of blue, the yellow skin,
And moon hat tied beneath the chin.[1]

[1] Overseer of muleteers.

CHAPTER XI.

Htawgaw.

I was now, in the January of 1914, appointed to command Htawgaw outpost. When at last the Putao column was gone, I set about making my own preparations. An important one, as experience teaches, is to visit the dentist, before launching out into the wilds. Down in Rangoon, I bought enough stores to last me for the six months of the Rains. All this jam, tea, coffee, etc., was packed in Messrs. Barnett's little sixty pound boxes, two of which make just a mule-load. Barnett's boxes are justly celebrated. They are seen on many a distant frontier road. Many an outpost is furnished from their wood; and in the end we use them for growing our seedlings in. Then transport had to be procured in Myitkyina. The most economical plan is to buy a few Chinese mules of one's own. This I did, and hired a young muleteer from Tengueh, called Chao Sheh Chwen, to look after them. This Chinese lad turned out a real brick. Later on he was promoted to work in the house and has ever since faithfully followed my fortunes. At this time, too, Hassan Gul, an Afridi, who had been my orderly in my regiment, took his discharge and joined me from Peshawur.

In the difficult times ahead, this man too showed the greatest devotion. Outpost life is full of terrors for the Burmese. The *lugalays*,[1] Maung Mya and Maung Po Myit, had to be coaxed to accompany me. This they did loyally, after one wild moment of panic. Henceforth dainty silk *lungyis*[2] and pink head dresses were discarded in favour of Balaclava caps and Whiteaway Laidlaw's grey woollen drawers. These are considered *de regle* for mountaineering. Nor would they cover up those immodest drawers, which were destined to offend me along many an open hill-side. At last, we were all ready. Everything was placed on a launch and taken across the Irrawaddy to Waingmaw, where Chao Sheh Chwen was waiting with the mules.

We slept at Wausaung and pushed on next day 26 miles to Seniku. It is a very long march. But the intermediate rest-house in the jungle had then been abandoned, partly because tigers were constantly carrying off mules there, and partly because one night a sepoy woke up to find one of his hands cut off. It was decided to turn this section of the road into a cart-road. In a fit of energy all the bridges were pulled down to make room for new ones. With that the enthusiasm abated, leaving us to wade and swim the streams for the next two years. These jungles are full of tigers all the way to Lauhkaung, but the forests are so dense that game of any sort is rarely seen. In the

[1] *Servants.* [2] *Skirts.*



MAUNG PO MYIT—A BURMAN FROM PAKOKKU.



A BURMAN FROM MAGWE.

Rains tiger tracks can be followed, sometimes for half a mile, along the soft clay path.

Upon meeting tiger tracks in these parts, it is always advisable to see if there is the mark of an extra toe on both fore and hind feet. If there is, you will know that the beast was a "Man Tiger," a wizard who can become a tiger whenever he wants to. There are many of them about, and they are greatly feared. Personally I only saw the pugs of ordinary tigers. They constantly carry off cows, which the *durwans*, or care-takers of the rest-houses, keep. There is very little traffic along the road throughout the Rains, after the Chinese mules have fled from the *Surra*.

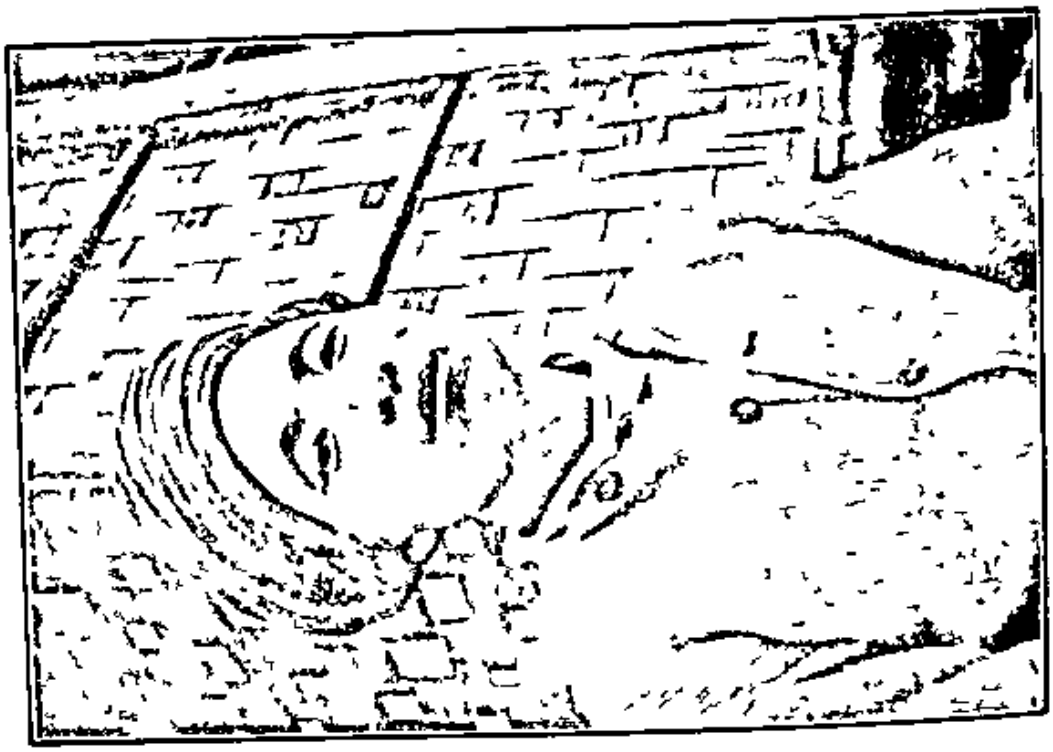
I once spent a week in Seniku to polish up my Kachin for the examination. In talking to the villagers I heard several curious tales about animals. One concerned the porcupine, which, they said, shoots down bananas with its quills. The quills are sometimes found stuck in the trees. If the porcupine misses seven times it will not touch the fruit afterwards, even if it falls. This legend was told me at various times by many different people. Apparently the Kachins really believe

[1] God or Godling.

had ordered that the stalk should be as big as a buffalo's leg (*Mam Mhpun gaw, wuloi lagaw taram kaba u ga*), and the ear as big as a pony's tail (*nsi gaw kumra maitsan taram kaba u ga*). Further, the Sun Goddess said, "let men die when their hair is grey." But the chameleon added, "let them die whether it is black or grey." So the chameleon is given a pretty bad time now and is never spared when seen.

The Kachins are still superstitious and fanatical, but are much more friendly to us now than they used to be. They have even learned quite to like the white *Duwas*[1] except when they trouble them to dig roads. Numbers of Kachins are Christians. They find Christianity ever so much cheaper than Animism, because no sacrifices have to be made. Their conversion is going on fast and is bound to be an immense benefit. It gives them religion where they had none at all before. They are perfectly frank in expressing their opinion about the *Nats*,[2] or spirits, which, they say, are a perfect nuisance. Perpetual sacrifices of goats and buffaloes are made to pacify these *Nats*, but still they go on *biting* just the same. *Nat bites* are what produce fever, and fits, and all the other diseases these people suffer from. The whole country is haunted by ghosts and godlings. The silent graveyards where they bury the *Duwas* in the forests are full of spirits. *Ga Nat* is the godling of the earth who makes the seed

[1] Chiefs [2] Gods or Godlings





prosper. *Shawa Nat*, the *Nat* of communities, has a special bamboo altar in the *Nat* grove, which stands at the entrance of every village. There is an altar placed there too for the ghosts of strangers who have died in that village. They greatly fear the *Nat Karai Kasang* who makes people mad. To keep all these spiteful spirits in good temper the Kachins have had to institute various kinds of priests, such as the *Tumsa* to say prayers, the *Phonglum* to sacrifice, the *Kingjawng* to arrange offerings on the altars, and the *Ningwawt wa* to divine by means of leaves and bits of bamboo.

The Kachins are capable of great improvement. Few savages develop so encouragingly with education. A Kachin who has come under the influence of a white *Duwa*, and has been taught to read, write, and wash, is really most presentable, both in mind and body.

Round about Seniku, however, the people are wilder. The Kachins and Marus practise free love at an early age, in what is called the *N'la dap*. Consequently, children are often born of hopelessly immature parents. Many such children are deformed. They also suffer terribly from goitre. A hideous little pigmy, swelled up round the throat till he can hardly breathe or swallow, looks just like a horrible human toad. Many, *very* many of these unhappy creatures are seen in every Kachin village. Sometimes they are mad, and then they are kept shut up in a cage, where they wallow in filth.

Beyond Seniku we travelled along the left bank of the N'mai Hka river for several days. The Htawgaw road passes through dreary, monotonous forests most of the way to Chipwi. Even the great river and its thundering rapids are only seen in glimpses through the dense jungle. In the Rains the journey is absolutely deadly. The heat is intense. Juicy green undergrowth springs up and smothers the path. Leeches lurk in the wet foliage which sweeps your face. Great snakes spread themselves along the road, which is the only sunny place they can find to bask in. Mosquitoes, blister-flies and horse-flies eat you alive. The horse-flies by no means confine their attentions to horses—though they drive them wild too. They shelter in the brim of your hat, from which they deliver a shrewd nip in the back of your neck. These are the visible terrors. But the place swarms too with *Nats* and ghosts. Their bite is very poisonous, and not one man in fifty escapes their fury. Call it *Nat bite* or mosquitoes, or whatever you like, the fever which follows a week later is of a very deadly kind. It is accompanied by high temperatures and distressing attacks of vomiting.

That is what the road is like in the Rains. It is very different in winter, when the climate is bright and sunny and the jungle dies down. You may rest with delight beside the still pools of Shingaw Hka. At Chipwi the Chipwi Hka river joins the N'Mai. In the Rains they form a great expanse of tormented waters—but in winter it is pleasant to sit on the rocks far out in the

river bed, and watch the evening shadows creep into the valley.

On arrival at Chipwi I met one of the Civil Officer's clerks, called Shing Rip. This Kachin is an example of the improvement Kachins are capable of with education. He was at the moment returning from his home where he had been to negotiate with his father. His father, it appears, had died twenty-four years ago, and had been reborn a Shan. He was now eighteen or twenty years old, and his son Shing Rip twenty-six. His father had lately become acquainted with a Shan trader, and by comparing recollections recognised him as a business partner in his previous life, and through him had learnt the whereabouts of his former Kachin family. It appears that at the time of the father's death this Shan trader had been present. The dead man followed him back to the Shan country, and so became reincarnate there. On that ghostly journey he could not communicate with his companions. He walked along with them by day, but used to stay near the ponies at night. And now he had returned to his own in flesh again. He had mourned at the tomb of one of his sons. He had recognised his wife, though she was now an old woman and very much remarried. He had inspected his fields, and as far as I could judge, was having an uncommonly cool reception in the bosom of his family. I don't know how it ended, but Shing Rip expressed himself then in most [illegible] language about it all.

Chipwi is 89 miles from Myitkyina. From there you rise sharply to 4,000 feet at Lauhkaung. The ascent is continued next day to the summit of the Wumaw Bum range, which is 6,800 feet. We called the top of this range Pyepat for some unknown reason. Pyepat being the first really high range met with by the monsoon precipitates a great deal of moisture. So while Lauhkaung on the Burmese side is drenched in rain from June to September, Htawgaw, my head-quarters on the Yünnanese side, is comparatively fine. The road is narrow over Pyepat. On the far side it passes along such steep cliffs, and down such narrow rock-cut galleries that it takes a good deal of nerve to ride. There are also other nasty bits further on near Hpimaw, where you seem to hang over the middle of a torrent, but there are really no worse places than the Pyepat. The hills are covered with beautiful forests, which in spring are ablaze with scarlet and yellow rhododendrons. The ground is gay with dog-violets and waxy gloxinias; and in the Rains the trees put on gorgeous garments of ferns and orchids. In June, big black and yellow raspberries ripen on the lower slopes. They are very excellent when eaten mashed with milk and sugar. From the crest of this range there is a good view of the snowy mountains which surround Hpimaw.

Thence there follows a steep plunge of several hundred feet into the "Valley of Death," which richly earned its gruesome name during the Hpimaw Expedition

of 1910. The long transport trains slipped and slithered somehow over the Pyepat, until they reached the depths of the valley below, where the sun penetrates for only a few hours each day. The sodden path soon worked into furrows along which hundreds of mules trod, until the holes were so deep that the smaller beasts could not step out again. Here some 400 mules were bogged, and died from exhaustion. About 200 others took an awful plunge over the precipices of the Hpimaw road. Altogether some 600 mules were lost, and the mule corps—recruited I think, from the Argentine—was hardly able to carry away even its own saddles and gear. Some idea may be gathered from this, of the difficulties of campaigning on this frontier. The Chinese mules came off much better, though they were mere midgets compared to the hulking Argentines. For one thing their owners were better horse-masters than the Government's Indian *drabis*, and besides, they were turned loose all night to seek grazing. The "Valley of Death" is now paved with stone all the way. The road still works into "ridge and furrow" in other places, but there are no bogs now into which a mule can completely disappear.

Immediately beyond is another range which we call Langyang. It is not quite so high as the Pyepat. From here you get your first glimpse of Htawgaw. Htawgaw is a lone hill of about 7,000 feet, standing in the middle of a circle of much higher mountains. In the Rains these are all capped with straight-edged

banks of cloud. Htawgaw lies in sunshine in the middle. Its new white granite forts show up boldly against the dark pine hills. It looks exceedingly pretty and attractive as first seen from this distance. Half a mile below the Langyang ridge is Langyang rest-house which is 5,500 feet. These rest-houses are only rough wooden huts furnished with two chairs, a table, and a bed strung with bamboo. They also contain a few illustrated papers. There is a big sand box in the middle of the room in which fires are lit. They fill the place with stinging smoke.

Htawgaw, as I learnt to know it later, is a perfectly delightful place. True, it is cut off from the world in the Rains from June to September. No one passes along the road then. The Chinese muleteers move off with their mules to their homes in Yünnan to be well out of the *surra* zone. None remain behind. One does not see a white face, or speak a white word for weeks on end. But there are compensations for those who care to fill in their time with gardening, photography, reading and languages. There is a long list of local languages, worth Rs. 1,000 each. The climate is cool, and the scenery grand, so that there is no need to be dull in Htawgaw. But without hobbies Out-Post life must be indeed intolerable.

My introduction, however, in a February blizzard, made a very painful first impression. I groaned at the prospect of long Arctic months here. I arrived on a bleak, dismal day. Mists were hurried across the

mountains by an icy blast. The forts — one of which was to be my house — were then only half built. The only accommodation was a grass hut, left by my predecessor. Its miserable fireplace swallowed up all the heat, and belched out all the smoke which had blackened the whole interior with soot. I can imagine even a Zulu Chief jibbing at a hut like this. The wind howled through its grass walls. The doors and windows, being of grass, left the place in total darkness when closed. They had once slid to and fro on a bamboo, but had long since ceased to perform this trick. Even when the building was wrapped in all the tents and tarpaulins of Htawgaw, its draughts were deadly. I crawled to bed that first night at 8 P.M., with the thermometer at 44° and my own spirits a good deal lower still. Things have changed since that memorable arrival. Htawgaw is now built with stout granite walls, and ruberoid roofs. I was soon able to destroy that hateful hut, and obliterate every trace of it. In summer I looked down from my new home over the Hpimaw valley to the peak of I-maw Bum (13,000 feet), which stood over against Htawgaw. It was covered with snow until the end of May. Far below, the Ngawchaung stream foamed along the valley. Its whisper came up to me on moonlight nights when I have stood and watched the white forts, lying lonely and luminous amidst the deep shadows of the surrounding depths. Htawgaw occupied the topmost pinnacle of the hill. The abyss yawned beneath it on all sides. I used to

think I could cast stones into the valleys, as Kim did the Russian's compasses at Shamleh.

Those moonlight nights in Htawgaw were still and very wonderful. I have stood long watching the white forts, and the brilliant star circling across the sky. Village fires twinkled across the valleys. But soon they all died out, and only darkness brooded in the depths. Only two faint, insistent cries of a nightjar intensified the utter loneliness. Great peace reigned over the serene hills. All the world lay hushed in sleep, and the thoughts were free to wander undisturbed very far away, to penetrate many hidden places. The thoughts of a man are his rarest possession. The richest is he who can slip away from his toil, and wander in imagination in the furthest fairy-land.

The Burmese say that there is a hare in the moon. At full-moon it is very distinct nestling against the Gibson girl. It was painted there by the *Thagya Min* in memory of the Buddha's incarnation as a hare, when he offered his own body in charity.

* * * * * *

Later on we cut a level path all round the hills. Before that, you could only walk down the hill, and come back home up it. But when the path was finished, walking became a pleasure, and we put up wooden benches overlooking the Hpimaw and Hpare valleys. I loved those views, and the soughing of the wind through the pines. Unluckily, such a commanding position

on a hill top was not pleasant in a storm. My house was twice struck by lightning, which was attracted by the high iron chimney of the stove. (There were no fire places, which was a great defect.) A sheet of flame passed through the room, but luckily no harm was done. On another occasion the flag staff of the big fort was struck and splintered to bits. Neither the sentry below it, nor the magazine near-by were touched, but a big bit of dressed stone was torn right out of its cement bed. We discovered later that the lightning conductor had not been carried to earth.

Htawgaw was once covered with pines like all the surrounding hills, but these have been cut away for military reasons. Whether any military benefit was gained by thus unmasking the forts is open to doubt. But the result has been just what one would have expected. Rain has entirely removed all the soil. It has been washed down the hill in mud streams of great length. Nothing can ever be coaxed to grow again, and Htawgaw remains a great white gash amidst the surrounding dark hills. Rain and frost work their wicked will with the crumbling granite rock, of which the hill is composed. It is the story of Kurrum, and of Poonch, and many other places, where forests have been ruthlessly destroyed. With the removal of the trees, the soil goes too, and after the soil, the rock. I mourn for the pines of Htawgaw. Their fate has been very hard.

The history of Htawgaw does not go back far. It is recorded that the Chinese sent an expedition

against the Lashis in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Htawgaw was seized, and assigned to the Ming Kwang Fuyi. Later it was burnt. Later still, the Lashis caught the Ming Kwang Fuyi and thirty of his men in the paddy fields of Padaw and destroyed them. The British occupied it in the end of 1910. The fort was completed in 1914.

The house and forts were ready for occupation in April. Mrs. Cuffe (now Lady Cuffe) who was the first Englishwoman ever to visit Htawgaw was present at the "house warming." It was a very jolly festival. Unfortunately Lady Cuffe's name is not recorded on the dining table. Later on, I collected on it the signatures of all visitors to Htawgaw, but at that early date we had not yet risen to the luxury of solid tables. Captain Cruickshank, who commanded Hpimaw, also came over for that "house warming."

Later on, he went to the war. Then Captain Malet, 38th Dogras, reigned at Hpimaw in his stead. We used to meet every six weeks or so, either at Htawgaw or Hpimaw and talk and talk, and left off steam. We were each in our own groove, digging it deeper, and we knew it. It was an infinite relief to discuss the war, to recount our doings, and criticise our betters. He brought out his banjo. And I turned on "A Summer Night" or "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" on the gramophone. And on such occasions his deaf bull-terrier came along too to keep my dogs Ling and Salim company—and for a day or two we forgot all about the loneliness.

On out-post, dealings with our few companions may be of two kinds. Either we are bosom pals, or else we hate the sight of each other, and still more of each other's servants. There is no medium. I am thankful to say I never experienced this latter: but there *are* out-post feuds which have become classic.

Many influences acted upon us then on out-post. First there was the influence of distant war, which echoed even through these remote hills. There was the haunting memory of friends dying heroic deaths on a dozen stricken fields. There was the world restlessness, which stirred the spirit in its depths. Above all there was great solitude. It was the solitude of wild silent hills about Htawgaw, shutting out China beyond, the loneliness of the cry of nightjars, of long, blank days of rain and mist. There was nothing to do but think and think.

Oh! the grandeur of those lost thoughts of the Military Police? What the world loses in them! How learnedly we speak of game and horse flesh. How eloquently we criticise our betters, noting how rich they are and how moral it makes them. How intellectually we talk of balls, and how they bounce and break, and what happened at the third hole. And of military themes, how Pagalman Limbu shot a bull, or maybe he didn't—lazy little swine. And of art, and the stage: what Tottie Tentoes sang two years ago, what she wore, and what she didn't. It is all very enlightening this talk in out-posts, when two or three

are gathered together. But when we are alone, we just talk to the dogs. They understand.

And alone, we have time to meditate many things. The potato crop; the seasons, and how they come and go; the shadows that travel slowly across the hills at dusk; the chickens, and what they lay. And how Chinese cook pork, and clerks account. How, in their solitude, some men take to verse, and others to vermouth. We see gay men become silent, oppressed by monotony; see them plough a groove for themselves, and move in it deeper every day. Out-post is an experience which leaves its mark for life. We are never quite the same again afterwards. And sometimes, if it has been too dull, if there has been excessive talk about the *amenities of life*, if the fever has been too lowering, we just go mad and are taken down jibbering idiots.

CHAPTER XII.

Out-Posts.

I used to spend about ten days of each month in Lauhkaung. The house there was a marvellous affair of matting and ruberoid. Whoever built it had large ideas. It was double-storied, and flapped about in the wind. On one occasion it was unroofed by a storm early in the Rains. The ruberoid was torn to shreds, and only half the house could be re-roofed that season. The other half became thoroughly sodden, and was given up henceforth to the cultivation of toadstools. The habitable half was as dirty, as only an old matting house can be. It was past cleaning. It was *not* a healthy sort of place. However, I got ten rupees a day for staying there, and that went far to reconcile me to it, after I had boarded the floor. But I don't think I shall ever forget the monotony of Lauhkaung, the lonesomeness of the nightjar's plaintive whistle and the Gibbon's calling.

Lauhkaung was hot, moist, and four thousand feet. Nothing in the garden could survive the bugs. A healthy plant would suddenly die. It had been nipped off its roots half an inch below ground. But things in the jungle grew as if by magic. Bamboos shot up forty

feet in three months. I measured one which grew two spans of my hand in three nights. At this growing stage the bamboo is pulpy, mauve-coloured, and covered with black hair.

Insect life was marvellous and maddening. Every inch of ground was full of grubs and ants and spiders. The beetles on the trees were five inches long. Some were black with yellow spots. The vultures of the earth are the ants. They swoop on any disabled thing, from a snake to a gnat. They sting to death fledglings that fall from their nests. There is no more awful fate than that of a wounded fly, hurried along by increasing numbers of ants. In spite of furious resistance it is dragged to a black, yawning cave, down which it passes to meet death underground. The tigers of the air are the blood-blister flies. They are suitably striped black and yellow. They sting painlessly. But afterwards, the wound becomes irritable, and fills with blood. The air sharks are mosquitoes, always voracious. Horse-flies have big, mild, green eyes, but stab like a hot needle. They love the blood of human necks and chins. Each hunter indulges his own particular taste. Blood-blister flies like knuckle-joints: sandflies prefer wrists and

orchid stumps, which cling to all the big trees, put forth magnificent white, yellow, and purple blossoms. The bracken which will stand 14 feet high in August now forces its way up, and will not be denied even on hard beaten paths. Even the insect-ridden gardens make a fine display in March. Roses bloom, and so do carnations—and in both live little white spiders which lurk deep down amongst the petals and catch bees as they come. These spiders are quite small, but they boldly seize a victim by the head, stab a hole in the back of his neck, and suck him quite dry through it. A large black spider weaves immense webs across paths in which it catches moths, beetles, and even men. The web is found to be surprisingly strong when your pony dashes you through it. Yet another spider sails across the valleys on a flying carpet, carried by a light breeze. Its gossamer web sparkles in the sunshine as it passes by. There is one insect in these forests which disguises itself as bird-lime. Another looks just like a bit of white fluff when it is all alone, but clusters of them on a branch are easily mistaken for lichen. Though frail and downy to look at, they are strong jumpers.

In the lower valleys birds are very numerous. One learns all their notes though they remain invisible in the trees. I do not know by sight many birds whose call is most familiar. In the quiet dawn their talking and whistling is exceedingly pleasant. A bird which the Gurkhas call *Kootar-ka* calls loudly then while

in the background of all those bird cries sounds the deep, regular moan of the *Hookus*. In the distance, as I write, I hear an English cuckoo, already a trifle flat, for he began to call in about November, I think. Another and much more persistent cuckoo is a bird which says *Yauk Pa Kwe Kaw* in Burmese (Brother-in-law call the dog). His is the most insistent cry of all, even more so than that of his cousin the *Koel*, who, by the way, the Chinese call *Ku-Gho*. *Ku* means poor: and *Gho* is derived from *Gho-Chee* an expression of pity: for the bird is said to be ill-used by a cruel step-mother. This shows that the Chinese are observant in these matters, for *Ku-Gho* is a cuckoo, and they have no doubt noticed the truculent young intruder in some one else's nest. Talking of bird cries reminds me that in the Punjab the ringed-dove, which tried to show where Joseph lay, says *Yusuf-Ku! Yusuf-Ku!* (Joseph is in the well). The infamous crow, who wished to betray Mahommed's hiding place in the cave at Jebel Thaur, cries *Ghar! Ghar!* (cave, cave).

But the most lonesome cry of all (and one which I am sure must have penetrated every one's consciousness often and often on out-post), is the nightjar, whose two plaintive calls, uttered at intervals of half a minute, fill the darkness with unutterable sadness. It is the desolate cry, so the Chinese say, of *Kwung-Ku-Lu*, the Naked-one. In a former life *Kwung-Ku-Lu* was the wife of a forester. Her husband *Chung-Dzur Fung* went to cut wood, but died in

the jungle, and never returned home. So the wife sought him all that night—and every night since—calling his name desolately through the darkness—*Chung-Dzur Fung! Chung-Dzur Fung!* But the search is vain. She will never find him. When he died there was no one left to care for her. She became naked from neglect, and in her present incarnation as a bird she is naked still. Therefore no man may see her. The night has cast its mantle about her. But you may hear her searching all night long through the forest for *Chung-Dzur Fung! Chung-Dzur Fung!*

In June the Spring passes, and the Rains begin. Touring ceases. The road becomes empty of Chinese mules. The mists sweep to and fro, revealing and obliterating again the surrounding mountains. The monotony paralyzes a man, forces him back upon his hobbies, or his vices, or whatever else gives his mind distraction. The silence descends upon him like something thick, solidifying his brain into suet-pudding. And the rain falls ceaselessly, drumming upon the ruberoid roof. At night it plays a desolate lullaby. It thrums on softly morning after morning when you wake to the *Drip Drip Drip* from the eaves. A wind moans through the mud and matting walls. Even the Gibbons cry more mournfully than usual. So we get rich on out-post, or pay our bills, but we do not live—we merely exist.

Then once a week comes the mail, plodding patiently through the dripping jungles. Here at last is an

amenity. Now come replies to long forgotten letters. Here is the regret of the ass who hasn't got what you ordered—and may he send the next best thing? Idiot! why didn't he send it? I must wire; but it will take another month of Sundays before the goods arrive. And here are the cigarettes I wired for, and a bottle of whiskey by letter post. Barnetts never lets you down—but the whiskey has cost less than the postage! And here are papers. It will take two hours to read the war telegrams alone. At present I glance only at the casualty lists. Good Heavens! A. and B. killed. There will be no one left soon! And here are the home letters. Everything else can wait while I read these.

Who would grudge the little comforts which slowly gather round these posts and are known officially as *Amenities of Life*? Ah! could the economist who writes so alluringly of *amenities* have been made to wake up in my place that first morning at Htawgaw! Could he have looked up from bed and watched the dismal waving of cobwebs in the filthy roof of my hut, and heard the wind moan through the walls! Much may be done to make life comfortable, and still more *would* be done, if you could foresee long residence. But you cannot tell how long it will last. Solitude, fever, dirt, lice, mails that miss, goat's meat for months on end, and chicken in all its hideous disguises—these and many other little things are all in the day's work, but they excuse the existence of *amenities*.

The country round Htawgaw and Lauhkaung is of very little interest so far as the people are concerned. They are mere savages. The largest unit of organisation is the village. One village has little intercourse with another. Generations of kidnapping and slave-dealing have sown the seed of deep suspicion. The lords of the land, the village head-men, or *Agiwas*, are nasty, dirty creatures. They slobber red mess all down their chins. They are hardly better than brute beasts, and much dirtier.

But the Marus of Lauhkaung were redeemed by their happy disposition. They were distinctly friendly, and were always paying visits to the post to be photographed or to listen to the gramophone. The ladies on such occasions were given presents of beads and cowries, with which they loved to decorate themselves. They formed tender attachments with the Gurkha sepoys, whose luggage they were often hired to carry. They are flat-faced, brawny girls with coy and teasing manners. An armoury of iron hoops and rings adorns their bosoms. Rows of cowries are sewn on to their blue clothes. They are loaded with gaudy rings, bracelets, and necklaces; and when dressed in full war paint for a dance, with broad cowry belts, coloured haversacks, and red streamers of ribbon to give away as *ban-puts*, or love-knots, they are highly picturesque.

The simple beliefs of the Marus are not really so very unlike those of other eastern people. Districts like Kangra or Kulu, in Northern India, are similarly haunted

with godlings of pines, peaks, and streams. In Japanese Shinto, the world was created by Izanagi and Izanami, the male and female gods of Heaven. The same supreme world creators are known to the Marus as Sik Sawp the Female Heavenly Being, and Hkrip Hkrawp the Male Earthly Being. The Marus, like the Japanese, worship their ancestors. But even the spirits of their dead appear to be hostile. The Japanese and Chinese set up pictures of the dead, or erect tablets inscribed with their posthumous names. The Kachins put up gifts for their dead on an altar in a special room in each house. The Marus erect altars for them outside the village, and like the Japanese place bamboo water cups on their graves. Taw Sein Ko in his "Burmese Sketches" (p. 157) describes a Burmese belief in "butterfly spirits," while Lafcadio Hearn tells of the same Japanese superstition in his Kwaidan (p. 154). Hearn also mentions a Japanese belief that living people can haunt other persons. The Marus hold an identical view. A person who gets himself disliked or hated by an enemy may become haunted by him and fall sick in consequence. The belief is perhaps quaint and hardly worth considering, but I wonder whether, after *all*, *all* hidden anger really evaporates into nothing, or whether, obeying the eternal Law of Cause and Effect, it does not become a powerful influence for evil.

Probably not one Maru in five hundred gets as far afield as Mandalay. Few have ever been even to Myitkyina. Their forests enclose them within a small

in the fields in little huts, protecting the ripening ears. These huts are built on steep ground. Long platforms are run out in front, projecting high above the sloping fields. Bamboo ropes radiate from the huts to clappers in all parts of the field. The Marus then look like spiders in the middle of their rope-webs.

The cultivated area is the common property of the village. Many minor crops are also raised, the whole lot springing up in confusion together. Beans are grown on tall poles along the pathways. After harvest grain is distributed to each house, according to the number of its inmates. The balance is set aside for barter with Chinese traders in exchange for salt, sugar, opium, and garments.

By this time the winter is over. The thatching season has come once more, and the whole round of toil begins all over again.

Thatching time is a festive season. Every one is collected at work in the village, instead of being spread over the fields. The whole village works on each house in succession, and at night its owner feasts the labourers. From dawn to dusk there is a continual sound of female chatter and laughter. In the evening paddy is husked by pounding it with a wooden stake. The jerk is accompanied with a sound like hiccoughing in every house. Then some one sets up a long quavering cry as the darkness falls. This is singing; and that cry continues unceasingly the whole night long. These are all the sounds of a Maru village at thatching time. A fire is

world of their own. They have no interests beyond the dull toil of agriculture, which divides their year into sections. By March the long, fine winter and dry season is drawing to a close. The grass is dry, and they hasten to cut it and carry it into the villages, for the annual re-thatching of their big, rambling houses. When that is finished the jungles have to be burnt before the rain comes and damps the foliage. Land is not cultivated more than once in seven years. Therefore all the hills round about are cleared in rotation once within that period. The Maru is the sworn enemy of jungle growth. He slashes at every sapling with his *dhar* and tears down a whole branch to get one fruit. It is only by this means that the jungle is kept from smothering everything. All the insects in the ground are also killed off by the fire. If the fields were used a second year without burning, the bugs would destroy everything as they do in our gardens. All through March, April, and May, clouds of smoke from innumerable forest fires hang like a pall over the country, and at night the hills are edged with flame. Ash falls from the sky for miles round, even in distant Myitkyina, if there is a strong breeze.

Later, the burned out spaces are cleared and gradually disencumbered with great labour from the fallen tangle of trunks. On the steep open slopes rice and maize are sown in season. In the early Rains these crops cover the ground with a sheen of green shoots. All through December and January the villagers live

in the fields in little huts, protecting the ripening ears. These huts are built on steep ground. Long platforms are run out in front, projecting high above the sloping fields. Bamboo ropes radiate from the huts to clappers in all parts of the field. The Marus then look like spiders in the middle of their rope-webs.

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lit in the newly roofed house. Wine is carried in. There is dancing, feasting, laughter, and the noise of gongs and firing, until there is light again in the East. The rising sun finds them exhausted with pleasure. Civilization has passed these children of Nature by. It has only given them diseases they never had before. Otherwise it has left them alone, to enjoy their simple lives. No one weeps except when death comes. No one quarrels, or nags, or scolds, or washes. Every one is continually laughing.

So they live. And after death they are laid in conical thatch tombs a little way out in the jungle. The graves are trenched about. Gaily painted bits of wood, shaped like birds and animals, are set up on poles near by. Upon the tomb lies the overturned jar which held wine at the funeral feast. So is the empty glass turned down, in memory, no doubt, of many rowdy nights in the *N'la dap* at thatching time.

Some of the tombs are new. Some very old, and overwhelmed by undergrowth. On one, near Pala village, snakes are painted. It was the nearest approach I saw to the cult of the *Nagas*. The ghosts of the dead rest out there, forgotten—yet feared. They play in the moving of shadows. They sigh with the breeze. They haunt the silent forest glades, watching fresh generations work and play, down below in the village.

One night there was a big *manau*, or dance, down at Raw-chu village to celebrate the re-roofing of one of the houses. Tambu Gam, the Maru interpreter, had friends

down there. So I went; though Tambu Gam explained that it was going to be a wild night. And it was. They danced as usual the whole night through and until after the sun was up again. They danced in a ring, hand in hand, round a fire. The step was slow, but favourable for the whispering of sweet nothings to a fair partner when wine had warmed the heart. They use two kinds of wine—both pretty potent. One is made of rice and is fiery like crude brandy. The other is made of *ya* (the Indian *bajra*) and has a mild pleasant taste like cider, or like Tibetan *chang*. It is, however, the more intoxicating of the two, and all the more dangerous on account of its apparent mildness. The Marus are hospitable hosts. No one may remain out of the dance. In the intervals the *Tumsa*, or *Nat* Priest, who held that important post by right of heredity, initiated me into his *abra-ka-dabra*. He had an altar rigged up in a separate room where he performed mystic passes with his *dhar* over some mummified mice, and offered food and wine to the household *Nats* to keep them in good temper this festive night. Maudlin songs were sung to me by men who, in more decorous times, worked for me as coolies. But now they abandoned themselves to the influence of wine and laughter. Shots were fired. Some one beat a gong. Things were pretty rowdy by midnight. The last thing I saw was the *Agiwa*, or headman, being put into fancy dress. I don't know when Tambu Gam, the interpreter, came home. He was not fit for work for fully three days.

with the things that live in the jungle, they are never without a *dhar*. Boys, as soon as they can walk, are so armed.

Slave-dealing is sometimes attempted still, if there is little chance of detection. A case occurred up the Tammu Valley recently. The culprit was peremptorily ordered to ransom the boy who had been sold into China. Very grudgingly and only after arrests had been made, the necessary number of gongs and cows were produced for the boy's release. But the lad had fallen amongst kind people and nothing could charm him back to his home.

On one occasion I marched from Lauhkaung to the Panwa Pass, which had to be visited at least once in the "Open Season." There is only a very rough path to it, which plunges down to Chiglai, and then climbs up and up to Rikjaw and Mu Kaun, which you reach on the third day, and look straight back across the deep valley to the still distinct buildings of Lauhkaung. At Rikjaw I hired a Kachin boy as a guide, but unfortunately a *Nat*[1] bit him, and he fell into the camp fire in an epileptic fit, and was consequently unable to travel.

We halted a day in Mu Kaun. It is a Lashi village. There happened to be no work going on in the fields at that season, so the people stopped at home all day. But it was not an idle time. They were thatching the

[1] Spirit or Godling.

Poor Tambu Gam! He was just about half civilized, when he got two months hard labour in Katha jail for appropriating a Government shovel, which had been abandoned on the side of the road. I thought it very rough. So did he: and it all but destroyed his taste for enlightenment. I secured his retention as post interpreter with considerable difficulty. However, he scorned to serve such an ungrateful *Asoya*[1] any more and left in a huff. But he cooled down later, and ran back twenty miles to say he had changed his mind about the *Asoya*.

The headman of Raw-chu, at whose village the dance had taken place, had, as a boy, been seized and sold into slavery for Rs. 30 by the headman of Rukchan village. He was taken to China where he lived in misery for three years till he escaped. The same headman still reigns at Rukchan. He is an old fellow now. His methods are mediæval. He has a violent temper, during fits of which he has killed several of his villagers; and once he went so far as to disembowel one of them. Presumably he has mended his ways since British occupation. Slavery was rampant here until we took over the country. Raids were constantly made by one village upon another. To this day men meeting on the road pass left arm to left arm, to show they do not propose whipping out and slashing with their *dhars*.[2] In this country where men wage eternal war with the rampant jungle and

[1] Government. [2] Knives.

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houses, weaving cloth, and husking paddy from dawn till dusk; and then they drank and danced all night as usual. However, they found time to crowd round the gramophone. "The Wedding Glide" and "Hullo Tu Tu" were received with shouts of delight; and one old lady choked over the comic parts of Chopin's "Funeral March," and was with difficulty revived.

After that there were no more villages and no more people for several days. We marched by desperate paths through interminable gloomy jungles. There was only one open space at which we halted. Numbers of boulders were strewn over the peat soil, so we called it "Stone Paved Camp." I hardly know how the mules reached it at all. They had boulders to climb over. In other places great trees had been blown down by the winter gales. Where it was impossible to get over or round such obstacles, there was nothing for it but to dig a road *under* them.

It was up hill all the way. It really seemed as if the *Nats* made ever higher and higher ridges ahead of us. Lashi paths do not beat about for an alignment down in the valley. The highest hills are hardly good enough for them. Stone Paved Camp was carpeted with primulas. It was sunny and cheerful when we arrived, but it rained so hard in the night that it became impossible to move forward. The *pavement* soon belied its name. The peat soil became sodden and water squelched up through the ground into the tents. Every one had a wretched time—especially the Kachin



DISTRESSING EFFECT OF CHOPIN'S "FUNERAL MARCH" UPON LASHI VILLAGERS.



TAMBU GAM, AND A MARU GRAVE AT PALA VILLAGE.





YAWYIN.

escort and the servants who had no bed to take refuge on as I had. They lay in water. The Chinese muleteers lived out in the open under their big round hats. At night they slept in a little tunnel formed by placing a few saddle crates in line.

Then suddenly it turned cold and snowed hard for a night. The water which had flowed everywhere was frozen up. The hills and forests became a white fairyland. The sun shone out brilliantly. Marching on we reached a ridge at about 7,600 feet and immediately shook off the depressing forest. Below us lay open hills and grassy meadows which have made the Panwa famous for its beauty and its grazing. Not very far off we could see the first Yawyin village, where we slept. The houses were quite different to the long, rambling buildings of the Kachins, Marus, and Lashis. Yawyin houses are quite small and are usually not raised from the ground. A fire burned in the middle of the floor. A cow's head hung smoking above it. Outside

for us along the frontier's edge. The women a decidedly pretty. They have good colouring and grac ful, upright figures. Their clothes too are gay. Th aprons they wear are divided into squares of gree yellow, blue, and red.

Beyond this, the Chipwi had to be forded twic These are its head-waters, and it is here quite a sm stream. Luckily there are no big rivers to cross on t Panwa road. In other parts of the country tw bridges are hung across the rivers at their narrow part, where the water below is most tempestuo The foot-way is slippery and only an inch or two wi The hand rails are unsteady and not meant to le upon. The mad rush of the waters, its overwhelmi noise, and the instability of the crazy bridge, betw them, produce a feeling of panic.

After a short march we camped on turf. The Pan is really a park. Its trees are scattered over o grassy slopes. Cattle and Chinese mules are tur loose to graze. Nature has fashioned this bri valley with rare discretion. Grand mountains above it. Their pine forests reach down along the lo spurs. In Spring, the Panwa is carpeted with primu The woods are aflame with scarlet rhododendron, the air is laden with the sweet scent of pine and bracken.





NORTH EAST AND NORTH WEST FRONTIERS.

Bejoya Tsau Nong (an *Abi*, *Kachin*) I and Hassan Gul (an *Afridi*, *Pathan*). Also the author
[illegible] dachshund, *Ant*, naturalized.

'Divide' to fall back through Sadon and Sima, towards Bhamo. To the south there is a high, imposing range called the Fei Shui Lee, which is covered with snow for many months of the year. It can just be seen from Lauhkaung. On the intervening ridges at its base boundary pillars have been set up. On this and on other occasions I visited some of them. A small Yawyin boy knew where the pillars were. But for him, we should never have found them. They were quite lost in the jungle, and the Kachin escort had to cut a path up hill and down till we reached them. We all wrote our names on the furthest pillar, and Hassan Gul, the Afridi, tied a bit of his *pugree* to a pole to make it look like one of the *Zyarats*, or shrines, of his own North-West Frontier.

From these far ridges we could look down into the valley where the Chipwi river was born, beneath the snows of Fei Shui Lee. The streams which trickled down the reverse slope became in time the Chin-htawng-ka which we could see in the plain below as we looked down over China. It was a very beautiful panorama. Little columns of smoke marked the site of villages. Somewhere down in the plain lay Yin-pan-kai, an important town—or, as its name implies, *fortified market*. Great domes of white cloud stood over the distant hills, reminding us that this land was well named Yünnan—*Land of the Southern Cloud*. Just so, must it have lain at the feet of those early Chinese invaders, who christened it.

Fragrant scents of pine, the breeze
Bears across the mountain sides;
Sighing through the stately trees
With the sound of distant tide.

Scarlet rhododendrons bloom,
Primulas amidst the grass,
Right and left the mountains loom
Walling in the Panwa Pass.

Far below lies China spread:
Land of *Kwan-yin*, *Han*, and *Tai*.
People worshipping their dead,
Drops the path to Yin-pan-kai.

In the evening a string of Chinese traders passed our camp and gladly unloaded most of their goods on us. One is inclined to look upon Yünnan as a wilderness, distracted by revolutions. As a matter of fact, it is much more prosperous than the districts on our own side of the border. There are robber bands here and there, and numbers of deserting soldiers who are always more or less desperate characters. The Yünnanese would be only too thankful if we stepped across and gave them strong rule, security, and good roads. By inclination they are peaceful traders and mule breeders.

There are no finer fellows anywhere in the world than these Chinamen of Yünnan. They are well behaved and thoroughly honest. They are industrious. Somehow they seem more human than other Chinamen. Their lives are very hard, yet they are always cheery and always ready to talk and joke, if you speak their language. They are independent and manly. They

hail you as an equal and treat you with perfect ease. I consider my servant Chao Sheh Chwen, who when I first knew him was only a rough muleteer, one of Nature's born gentlemen, while the whole-heartedness of his affection seems to be only one side of a very fine character. There is nothing more difficult to win than a Chinaman's affection, and no love is more touching and loyal than his, once he has given it.

Htawgaw and Hpimaw depend for their luxuries on Yünnan. The Maru and Lashi villages are unproductive, even to the extent of one little egg. These Heaven-sent Chinamen—real Celestials—bring over salt, sugar, potatoes, chickens, and eggs. Chinese chickens have black bones. Their feathers are all on end like a bottle brush. For some reason the eggs we bought remained fresh for quite three months. We could buy them at fifty-five for a rupee.

With the Marus the Chinese trade cloth and salt in exchange for paddy. Now Government is beginning to buy up this local paddy. At first the Marus were reluctant to sell, fearing that they would have nothing left to barter with the Chinese, on whom they rely entirely for salt. However, they very soon found that the Chinamen much preferred money to bulky loads of paddy, and after that paddy purchase at the posts of Lauhkaung and Htawgaw proceeded merrily. An experiment was made of bartering salt for paddy on behalf of Government, but I don't think it was a success, as salt, kept in bulk through the Rains, melts considerably.

The Chinamen also bring in wine. The Civil Officers call this "smuggling"; which sounds well. They make spasmodic, futile efforts to stop the trade. The Chinese also import opium, though before long the flow of opium will probably travel in the reverse direction. The prevention of that trade, to which we are bound by treaty with China, will be the cause of grave difficulties in the future.

I now returned to Htawgaw direct by a disused path over the mountains to the village of Hpare. It was a difficult journey, and my Kachin sepoys had plenty of clearing work to do as we marched along. The mules had to be carefully muzzled, because aconite grows in these forests.

I always enjoy having a Kachin escort. The commander of this one was an irresponsible youth called Ching Kam Gam. He had been promoted to the rank of *Lance Naik*[1] for pluckily killing a big tiger with only his *dhar*. His arm was broken and permanently disabled, but he managed first to deliver the tiger a shrewd swipe over the rump, and afterwards to kill it. They were wonderfully cheery and amusing these Kachin sepoys.

The weather turned bad again. The path was simply awful. At Hpare there was a hut built by the Civil Officer. It was a dirty place, but we were glad enough of its shelter and to dry ourselves by the fire which we lit in the middle of the floor.

[1] Lance Corporal.

Hpare is a pretty spot. In spring it is full of pear blossom and dainty blue iris. Later on, I took about twenty mule-loads of these iris roots up to Htawgaw, to try and arrest the denudation from rain upon its naked slopes. These iris seemed to be doing well when I left and to be binding the remnants of the soil together.

There are three passes concentrating on the Htawgaw district. The Panwa I have already described. The Hpare Pass is ten miles up the valley from Hpare village. It is smothered in trees, and there is no view from it. I used to find choice orchids up there. The third pass is that of Lagwi. It is much more open. By climbing a bare hill to the left of it, a good view could be obtained down the valley of the Hsi-chan Ho. I used often to sit up there breakfasting, smoking, and sketching. To the north-east a curious trench had been cut straight across the mountain spurs, as they fell to the valley. It was evidently a recent fault, caused no doubt by an earthquake. The pass was full of primulas and rhododendrons. Yin Pang Kai, so some Chinese traders told us, was one day's march distant. These passes are used a good deal by foot passengers, though beyond the villages of Lagwi and Hpare the respective paths are simply awful. I don't think a loaded mule could get along them now. In many places the only road is up along the stream bed. I visited all these passes several times, and sometimes took a machine gun up to *amuse* the villagers.

CHAPTER XIII.

War in the Out-Posts.

Htawgaw is 130 miles from the railway. In the Rains the country is shrouded in mist, so that helio messages cannot get through. The stations are shut down. The all-wise Censor forbids even news which has already appeared in the public press to be telegraphed to out-posts. Consequently, war news comes up only once a week by mule. For no less than twenty-one days after war with Germany broke out, we lived our own quiet lives, utterly ignorant of the blaze that had consumed the world since the 4th August, 1914.

Then the shock came all concentrated in one staggering message. Some one had remembered us!!

Obviously, the first thing to do was to enlighten the sepoys upon events of such supreme military importance. "The entire world has been at war for three whole weeks," I told them, when we had assembled round the blackboard.

I saw incredulous eyes wander away to the quiet mountains about us.

"Here," I said, drawing a line before Paris, and thereby anticipating Mr. Hilaire Belloc's method by months,—"Here are millions of Germans faced by this line, who are millions of French and British."

Here I began to turn millions into *lakhs* in a corner of the North Sea. "*Lakhs* of men are dead already."

Some one said "*beshuk*,"[1] and the *Subadar*[2] was about to add "*hoga*," when I cut him short.

"Here, in Htawgaw, we live in peace." I continued. "And why? It is the magic work of our battle-ships, which have bottled up the German fleet in the Baltic —no, no *Subadar Sahib*. Baltic, Baltic. That's Cracow."

The Subadar now pointed to the Baltic, including most of Siberia in one comprehensive sweep.

I felt I was carrying little conviction. For example, every jack man knew that the *Subadar* was "living here in Htawgaw in peace," simply because his feud with another and more powerful *Subadar* condemned him to it. Von Tirpitz and Von Kluck had nothing whatever to do with it. I saw I must explain myself in simpler terms. After all, who *had* ever heard of half a *lakh* of dead?

"See here," I said, indicating the Aisne. "Here is the front, the trenches. Just like the trenches we dug last week. They are 250 miles long. They would extend unbroken say from Pegu to Mandalay."

That did the trick. I saw an impatient movement amongst the audience. I knew I was finally and irretrievably discredited. It was a romance. Some

[1] *Beshuk* and *hoga* are polite but incredulous ways of saying "*is that so.*"

[2] Native Officer.

new fangled game. Asked to sum up, the *Subadar*, suppressing a yawn, stated that "every one else has gone to war with Australia."

"That will do for to-day," I said, calmly. "You may dismiss—and as you seem to have so thoroughly grasped the situation, I don't think it will be necessary to have any more lectures."

* * * * * *

It was all immeasurably beyond their comprehension, just as it was also beyond mine too. But what matter? They fought well when the time came. The first call for volunteers was made very soon; and many of those same lads who yawned then have died heroically since in France and the Dardanelles. By August 1915, eighteen hundred and thirty-nine Military Police volunteers had been drafted into the 14th and 15th Sikhs, the 57th Rifles, 129th Baluchis, 39th Garhwalis, and 1-1, 2-2, 2-3, 1-4, 2-8, and 1-9th Gurkhas. "I fully realise," wrote the Commander-in-Chief, "what it has meant to you to send so many of your best men from the Burma Military Police to the assistance of the Indian Army in the time of its greatest need." Many British Officers of Gurkha regiments had also been allowed to volunteer and already Moule, Charles Mullaly, and Sparling had been killed; and many others wounded.

Can you realise the anxiety of the following months for those of us left behind? No, of course you cannot.

No one will ever know the acute suffering out-post officers have gone through, as slowly all hope of getting to the front died out utterly. Some took it in moody silence. Others paced it up and down in small quarters, all the long dreary Rains, ruining their carpets. Oh! the fretting, the unspeakable, impatient gestures. There is dull routine to be done and some one must do it. It is our duty here to pass the Empire down to the next generation, intact in all its parts. Such is the kindly meant philosophy offered us by our friends; but there is little comfort in it. The vigil here is long and very lonely; the rain unceasing. Mists sweep down over the hills, and it is very dreary till next week's telegrams come. That is what we endure *now*. Afterwards, there is worse to follow: the well-meant, intolerable condolences of be-medalled comrades.

No, I feel sure you cannot know—you who go nightly to the club and discuss matters over vermouths till it is late. You go home with the pressure relieved. On outpost this relief is denied. There is no one to speculate with. Dinner comes at 7-30 and is finished by 7-40. Afterwards I pace up and down, exhausting my slender store of cigarettes at furious rate. Is it patriotic even to have a store at all? I hope so. Anyway I have food stores for six months locked up in my *godown*. A regular "hoard." War prices have not touched me at all. Would that I could transfer some of my surplus sugar to our cook at home!!

After this I manœuvre a few flags. Here is the Grand Duke's army. Obviously, as he has invested Königsburg and won five battles daily ever since, he must be quite close to Berlin. Yet with reference to last mule's cables, we must still leave a few flags on the Vistula. And a year later he is back again on the Vistula, and behind Warsaw, and behind Brest Litowsk. But now it is bed time.

* * * * * *

Very, very slowly the truth of the war began to dawn upon the natives about me. I was aware of a sort of suppressed panic.

We had three Post Office savings accounts up here, and the investors were getting uneasy. It was the *Emden*, whose exploits had apparently greatly impressed the telegraph clerk, who constituted a sort of press bureau. Colour was lent to these horrible stories by the delay of two mails. The war had at last become a *reality*. Communication with India was cut. My own flights of imagination at the blackboard were entirely eclipsed. The *Emden* had the power to convert herself into an airship, whose lights had been seen. Indeed, one evening at dusk she was observed to alight in the valley. In the calming of these fears I found one solution of the question "How can I help?"

"Pooh, pooh," I said. "The *Emden* affair is nothing. Here is Hindenburg held up. The Grand Duke is winning hands down on the Vistula, and takes 2,000 Austrians daily with machine guns. The Serbians

have claimed their 198th victory. *These* are the things that count."

My breath was wasted. In those early days the A to Z of the war was "*Emden*."

To begin with, the Burmese papers called her the "brave little *Emden*." That was the first we heard of her. By the time two home mails had been held up, she was the "cowardly *Emden*." After that news of her reached us in the following order:—

TOKIO.—The *Emden* has been sunk.

RANGOON.—(Once in mortal terror, but now perfectly safe itself)—The Commander of the *Emden* in shelling Madras proved himself a humanitarian.

COLOMBO.—It is officially denied that the *Emden* was sunk.

SYDNEY.—The German cruiser *Emden* has appeared in the Bay of Bengal and *may* threaten shipping.

MYITKYINA.—The mails are late and will be forwarded to you together with next week's, *if received!*

Well, be thankful all of you who have had a daily paper and a club bar to discuss it at. His Majesty's mail (a sore-backed mule) crawls over the passes to out-posts only once a week. He is known to us as the "Amenity of Life." The solution of momentous questions awaits his next visit. The fate of Empires hangs in the balance. Many issues depend on His Majesty's mail and the opium befuddled Chinaman who drives

It is a race worthy once more of the past, heroic, determined, united. The artificial forms of speech, dress, politics, and patriotism of the old foolish days have melted away. We are passing through cleansing fires, winning a war of exhaustion. But, when we used to speak of "cleansing fire" and "wars of exhaustion," we knew not what dreadful things we meant. The fire is more fierce than we imagined, the exhaustion more painful.

Yet it is this very suffering which has arrested the decay which too profound prosperity had encouraged. Nations are kept going by reverses as well as by victories. Our Indian Empire was established as much by the Black Hole and the Cawnpore Well as by the triumph at Plassey. We were stimulated by the tragedies of the Afghan and Boer wars. Russia is all the healthier for her humiliation at the hand of Japan. We know that a new France has risen from the ruin of 1870. No one would dare predict the end of this present war, but whatever the result, even if the Empire is destroyed in a heroic struggle, *that* end would be better than sheer, inglorious decay, or certain humiliation at German hands a few years hence. The war was inevitable. Further delay would have been for us the worst possible disaster.

MY RESTLESS SWORD.

Peace, restless Sword. Be still, be still and wait.
Full well I know the reason for Thy wrath.
We also serve, who, watching, stand and wait.
I pray the day may come to draw Thee forth.

The cause is just, the need of England great:
Indeed, the war is worthy of Thy steel.
Women and children slain in lust and hate.
Peace, peace Impatient One, be still, be still.

True to our word: the enemy deride
"*A scrap of paper*"—*boast of hacking through.*
But England never casts her pledge aside;
And Thou, Brave Sword, can do some hacking too.

Far from the roar and welter of the strife,
Alone and anxious. Yea, I was afraid
Until the soul of Thee restored my life,
And inspiration reached me through Thy blade.

Peace, angry Sword. Again and yet again
I feel the noble impulse of Thy wrath.
What troubles Thee? The thought of wrecked Louvain?
I pray the day may come to draw Thee forth.



THE HTAWGAW—HPIMAW ROAD.



HEAD-WATERS OF THE CHIPWI RIVER.

CHAPTER XIV.

Hpimaw, and the Feng-Shui-Ling Pass.

Hpimaw is 39 miles beyond Htawgaw. Malet and I used to ride through in one day in the "open season," leaving the transport to follow on slowly. Until it arrived I lived in comfort at Hpimaw with borrowed pyjamas and Gilgit boots and with tents for bedding.

The Htawgaw-Hpimaw road passes through one of the finest bits of country in all Burma. The mountains fall precipitously from the snowy pinnacles of Hpaw-law-lang Bum to the tormented waters of the Ngawchaung. In winter there are glimpses of snow here and there—and at Hpimaw magnificent snowy ranges rise up against the fort.

The road is narrow. In places, sickeningly narrow. There is no outer wall and the eye glances nervously into the depths below. Should the pony trip or shy (and it is always doing both), a plunge into the gulf *must* follow. Many and many a mule has taken it. The sound of the Ngawchaung, which came up like a whisper to my windows at Htawgaw, is now a deep, menacing roar. Presently the river is crossed at a great height in a wild rocky gorge by a wire bridge, which sways and undulates like thin ice as you come

on to it. The torrent is spanned in many places also by cane bridges made carelessly of creepers. Only a Lashi could face them. Occasionally tributaries join the Ngawchaung, sometimes falling into it over rocks from a great height. The hills are covered with grass and flowers and pine forests. The air is laden with their fragrance and with the trilling of larks.

From a high point near the wire bridge you can look down and see the big fish revelling in a clear bit of water behind some rocks and rolling in the swift stream till their sides flash in the sunshine.

Such rare sunshine it is too, in early winter. All through the Rains mists hang heavy over this valley. The pine trees loom through the fog, dripping with wet, and covered with orchids. The steep hills give way and slip down, obliterating the road. At that season there is no romance about Hpimaw.

But now it had undergone a magical change. The air was invigorating. We could ride the whole day long in radiant sunshine. The sky was intensely blue, like that of Southern Italy. There is a bungalow at Black Rock, where Malet's excellent Burmese servant Maung San Baw and his Chinaman Lau Lu (the Old Cow) would usually have lunch ready for us. Thus fortified we proceeded at a more leisurely pace, crossing at sunset an old glacial moraine now covered with the rice plots of Hpimaw. In the growing dusk and moonlight we climbed the last long ascent to 7,842 feet at Hpimaw fort.

Hpimaw is magnificently situated. All round about it the spurs and peaks of the great Irrawaddy-Salween 'Divide,' range themselves over against the Post. The Hpimaw Pass is only a few hours' climb from the fort, and from there, high up on the crest of that much discussed 'Divide,' you look down upon the unknown country of Yünnan—*Land of the Southern Cloud.*[1] Indeed, it really is almost unknown. Parts of it are entirely unexplored. Elsewhere, Surveyors in big Chinese hats and blue clothes have bravely carried their plane-tables over the hills and recorded many strange things. But no one else may penetrate. We can only gaze curiously from this 'Divide' across to the next one—the Salween-Mekong 'Divide.'

Within less than thirty miles of country are crammed three mighty rivers—the Salween, Mekong, and Yangtze-Kiang, each separated by a high 'Divide.' These three rivers, here flowing in long parallels, reach the sea in such widely distant places as Moulmein, Saigong, and Shanghai. To the south of Yunnan lies the French province of Tongkin; to the east Kuei-Chou and Kuang-Hsi; to the north of Ssu-Chuan. But the wildest and strangest border of all is this western, Burmese one. In the north, the recent occupation of Hkampti Long (Putao) has established our authority to the crest of the 'Divide,' until somewhere, no one quite knows where or how, the frontiers meet

[1] *Yun*, cloud: *nan*, south.

those of Tibet. The Irrawaddy-Salween 'Divide' is followed to a point a little south of the Hpimaw Pass, after which the frontier falls back along minor ranges *viâ* the Feng-Shui-Ling, the Htawgaw passes of Lagwi, Hpare, and Panwa, and thence in a great re-entrant to Bhamo. Further south, in the Southern Shan States opposite Keng-Tung, it passes beyond the Salween and even reaches the Mekong. Little did I think then that my very next command would be at Loimwe, trans-Salween, and that my eastern border would be the Mekong itself. But all that is another story and has no place in this book.

Far below us, as we stood on the Hpimaw Pass, lay the Chinese Military Posts of Luchang and Kutan Ho—fragments no doubt of that menacing chain of frontier forts established by the brilliant, but ill-fated Empire-builder, Chao Erh Feng. We speculated as to the strength of those posts and of what they said and thought about us. From all accounts they appeared to work strenuously and were highly trained. Twelve little blue-clad figures in big straw hats climbed up towards us out of China at a rapid pace. These men said they had come to buy mules. They disappeared down the hill towards Hpimaw.

Hpimaw itself used to be a Chinese post, until we established our claim to the 'Divide' border. The village of Hpimaw, which is occupied by Lashis, was burnt in December 1909, by the Chinese. The excuse they gave was that taxes due on the coffin-wood trade

had not been rendered. In consequence of that act we occupied the place in 1913.

Before I left in 1915, we seemed to be on pretty good terms with our Chinese neighbours; but the Chinese authorities were not very cordial all through 1914. They apparently resented our presence in Hpimaw, and issued fulminating edicts forbidding traders to cross the passes. This they enforced by moving out troops from Kutan Ho to points at which they could command the road. The people themselves, however, were indifferent. If anything, they liked us, because we gave them a market. They took every opportunity to slip across and sell us eggs and sugar. It was only opposite Hpimaw that hostility was shown towards us. Elsewhere, our Surveyors were even invited to come and sketch. They were often cordially entertained. A better map was then being made. The work of those Surveyors—Tara Singh, Ahmed Ullah Khan, and others—was beyond praise. It demanded tact, skill, and patience. Yet they got less pay than Jin Jaw, my disreputable post interpreter. But they were playing the "great game." Sometimes we met them on windy mountains and mistook them for Chinese. Everything about them was soiled and dirty, except that one little sheet of paper, sheltered by an umbrella. Upon that sheet their whole mind was concentrated. I was filled with admiration too for the Military Police Sepoys, usually Kachins, who furnished survey escorts. Sometimes they were away without pay or rations for six months

at a time. Their uniforms were in rags and their boots full of holes when they suddenly turned up again smiling.

* * * * * *

Beautiful Yünnan. It was, indeed, beautiful as we looked across it to those opposite 'Divides' of the great rivers. Smoke of villages rose in the valley. There was nothing in those quiet mountains to hint at the misrule and revolution which had lately distracted this land of Han. Indeed, the very spirit of Kwannon, the Buddha of mildness, of boundless pity, seemed to rest over those calm, passionless hills. Again those great white clouds stood over them, as no doubt they did twenty-one hundred years ago, when in 200 B.C. the first Chinese armies looked down upon it and called it Yünnan—*Land of the Southern Cloud.* The Chinese are happy in the names they find for places. The next pass to the south, they call the Feng-Shui-Ling, or *Peak-water-Pass.* The Hpimaw pass they call the Kutan, after the village of Kutan Ho (*Defile-rapids-river*) which lies below it.

In Yünnan they call first class towns *Fu*, like Tali-fu and Yünnan-fu. Second class towns are called *Ting*, like Tengueh-ting, which, by the way, the Burmese call Mo-mein. Third class towns are called *Chou*, and fourth class *Hsien.* Markets and forts are respectively *Kai* and *Chai*, like Yin Pang Kai and Ta Chai.

It is said that in no other part of the world are more different languages spoken in a small area than on the Burmese border. Here in Hpimaw we had to deal with Burmese, Chinese, Maru, Kachin, Lashi, Atsi, Yawyin, not to mention English, Urdu, Pushtu, and Gurkhali. It rarely happens that less than six or seven languages are spoken in the camp of a Military Police Officer, and as many religious opinions held; for here, side by side with Hindus, Sikhs, Mahomedans, Christians, Toaists, Confucians, and Buddhists, exist those simple faiths in devils, *Nats*, and ghosts, than which nothing could be more primitive. On the slightest provocation Tambu Gam, my Maru interpreter, would sacrifice a cow to propitiate a suddenly excited *Nat*. The whole of this cosmopolitan camp would easily enter into the spirit of debauch. Race prejudices are soon rubbed off in Burma. And yet this friendly intermingling would never take place without the peculiar influence of one British officer. I often think this power we have of temporarily uniting antagonistic people is the secret of the success of our Empire. When we go, all these people will separate again and eat once more with their backs to one another.

* * * * * *

The Lashis believe that frontiers are made expressly for their convenience to commit murders across. They are a treacherous, murderous crew. They murder without a scrap of provocation, and, if possible, when

Such is the modest story of a Hpimaw intrigue. This was the cooked and expurgated edition—for in fact, my Chinese tutor was *himself* "that friend" who bashed his sleeping victim over the head for the price of eighteen rupees.

* * * * * *

Alas! for the blindness of ignorance. Hpimaw has *infinite interest for those who have eyes to see more* than I can. The botanist discovers new rhododendrons, and a dozen unknown primulas, thus attaining immortality before breakfast. The naturalist says he finds eight unclassified fleas, though I can't see anything particularly strange in this. I have always cherished a theory that all fleas are sufficiently classified—as fleas.

Near Kung-Fung there is a coffin-wood depôt, where the Chinese collect coffin planks, which they cut high up in the mountains and float down to Kung-Fung. They are very suspicious of visitors, whom they suspect of *being on the scent of some fresh form of tax*; while their chief interest in life is the evasion of taxes. The great planks, called, perhaps rightly, "boards of happiness," are carried by coolies through Hpimaw, and over the Hpimaw pass into China. The bottoms and lids are as much as ten feet long and three inches thick.

The Hipmaw forests have not been disturbed much yet. Bears play close up to the post. Deer range the hills unmolested. The stately silver pheasant, with

asylum offered by British territory. Could this be them? It was to ascertain this that we had come out to admire the sunset from a hill above the huts where the Chinamen were cooking a meal.

The grass huts were now practically wrecked, and the conflict apparently over. One fellow had put up a good fight and was covered with blood. By lamplight we examined them up in the fort. They knelt before us with hands clasped in *shiko*, the picture of innocence; but from the innumerable secret places in which Chinamen stow things, were taken hundreds of silver coins, called *kwai*, each of which was worth about two rupees. They also had upon them lumps of silver and gold as well as jade pipes, buttons, and bangles. Surely these were the robbers!

But no. A few days brought proof that they were not the robbers but our rivals—the garrison of Ku-tan Ho, or a part of it. It appears that they had had no pay for nine months. When at last it *did* come, they bayonetted their *Subadar*, shot the Captain, and made off with all the cash into Hpimaw. They were a young lot as Chinese soldiers always are now a days. He who had put up the best fight and had been somewhat damaged in consequence, had combined the duties of *Havildar*[1] and of Armourer at Ku-tan Ho. Another fellow acted as professional gambler to the party, keeping their wealth in healthy circulation. The man

[1] Sergeant.

with a wounded eye had had it stabbed out a few days before on parade by the bayonet of his front rank man.

All this they told me with engaging frankness a few days later when, to my surprise, I was ordered to release them. So I counted their money back to them. Overjoyed at release and at getting their ill-gotten wealth back, they knelt before me and pressed their foreheads to the ground. Even brigands in China have nice manners.

There are three important passes leading over the mountains into Hpimaw. One is the Hpimaw pass which I have already described. Another is the Chimili; and a third the Feng-Shui-Ling, which I visited with Malet in February 1915, just before I finally left this part of the country. The Chinese name Feng-Shui-Ling means "*Peak-water-pass.*" We travelled very light as the pass has almost fallen into disuse. It is rarely crossed except by porters who carry much of the coffin-wood from Kung-Fung into China by this route. We stopped the first night at a camp of which the Yawyin name is Chu-Yea-Haw. The ground was thickly carpeted with primulas. The hills round about us were imposing. It was a memorable night. We sat beside a huge bonfire, and I remember arriving at the decision to apply for transfer to the Southern Shan States. Eventually that desirable transfer was arranged, and I went to Loimwe. I look back therefore gratefully to our bonfire at Chu-Yea-Haw.

We paddled up the bed of a stream all next day through dense jungle and finally camped in an open





NEAR HPIMAW, *en route* TO THE

space a mile or so short of the pass. Though the distance was only 12 miles the mules did not get in till four o'clock. Aconite grows in these forests also, so the animals had to be again muzzled with their nose bags. The trees were hearded with moss. The jungle, though grand, was also depressing. A few rhododendrons were already in flower. We got thoroughly wet in the last mile, where we walked along the level shingle bed of a stream. At length we came to the great open valley where we had decided to camp. It was a great relief to get out of the forest again. The Feng-Shui-Ling is well named "*Peak-water-pass.*" About the "water" we had never been left in doubt. We found another biggish stream next day, flowing for half a mile across the top of the pass. Now we saw the "peak." It was an imposing cliff whose sheer naked walls were fringed along the upper edge with pines. To the left was a much lower peak. We visited this next morning. On the way up we found a salt-lick in the jungle, and one of our Gurkha escort shot a doe there in the evening. On the pass we found the boundary pillar. From the top of the peak we got a glorious view over China. Before us spread valleys and noble uplands, bare or wooded, and streaked here and there with snow. The most important of these valleys was that of the Min Kwan Ho in which there was a big village called Ta-Chu-Pa. Behind the hills lay Yin-Pan-kai (*fortified market*). All these passes, the Feng-Shui-Ling, the Lagwi, the Hpare and even

the Panwa, all lead more or less directly to Yin-Pau-kai.

On the way back to Hpimaw we met no less than fifteen porters carrying between them twenty coffin planks. They are probably sold in Ta-Chu-Pa, where they become associated with all sorts of solemn rites and ceremonies, and perhaps remain forty or fifty years unburied. I have seen these coffins covered with lacquer, lying in solitary splendour in Hong Kong, and in the "City of the Dead" in Canton; but never before in their rough state.

We reached Hpimaw again on the fifth day after starting out, just in time to avoid bad weather. The very next morning we woke to find Hpimaw whitened, and thick flakes of snow swirling down over the hills. It snowed hard all day, but cleared in the evening, leaving the opposite mountains pure and beautiful. It froze at night. Those great snowy ranges looked cold and ghostly in the moonlight. That was my last impression of Hpimaw. When I left it for good next morning, it lay white and dazzling in the bright sunshine.

Malet joined me in Htawgaw two months later for one last dinner, the night before I finally left on transfer. There was a violent hail-storm that evening. The stones were as big as pigeon's eggs. The bombardment of the ruberoid roof was deafening.

I left Htawgaw and all the associations of the last eighteen months with many regrets. Like the prisoner of Chillon I had learned to love my imprisonment

and to dread the outside world. "My very chains and I grew friends, so much a long communion tends to make us what we are: even I regained my freedom with a sigh." I missed the grand peaks of Imaw Bum, the shadowy gulf of valleys below, the sad call of the nightjars. Those two faint cries for *Chung-dzur Fung! Chung-dzur Fung!* repeated every few seconds, unceasingly through the night, will ever recall to me memories of Htawgaw and Lauhkaung.

HPIMAW.

With primulas, most dainty, sprinkled o'er;
The mountain slopes and forests of Hpimaw
Climb spur on spur, ascending to the snow;
Whose cold serenity few rivals know.
Grand as Kashmir: with sky of Naple's blue,
No artist ever dared to paint so blue.

The mountain hawks which poise aloft may scan
Snow pheasant in the bracken. *Tragapan*
Of noble gait, whose gorgeous plumage shines,
Feed in the sunshine, 'neath the whispering pines.
Along the path the Chinese *coolies* toil
Taking the coffin planks to Chinese soil.

CHAPTER XV.

Real Burma again.

Other sounds besides the morning cry of Gibbon and the plaintive call of nightjars are reminiscent of Burma too. Those are only the noises of the forest. There is the sound of gongs also, and the whisper of wind-blown bells. And then there are the river sounds—the suppressed hum of resting engines, so welcome after long absence in the wilds. And next morning over early tea and cigarettes I listen contentedly to the swift throb of paddles and the call of lascars as the steamer *Taping* races down the river from Katha to Mandalay. We moved luxuriously now without all the bother of packing kits and loading mules which make long marches so tedious. It was the real Burma again, all fresh and novel after an absence of eighteen months. It was Burma viewed in the morning sunshine, with hills and pagodas flitting by and bright cheery scenes at every riverside port. At one little place a woman came on board carrying an old helmet case. I asked her about it. She said it had belonged to her *Thakin*.[1] He had been dead very many years now, but she always carried his hat about with her in its case

[1] Master.

wherever she went. She had never forgotten her *Thakin*.

So we swept on through this gracious land of silk and gold and kindliness. In the evening we passed the great Mingun Pagoda and lay off the shore at Mandalay. A tram runs thence to the Arakan Pagoda where all those memories of Buddhism were awakened as I stood before the image of Maha Muni, sitting so calmly in the electric light. I heard again the whispered adoration, and smelt the sweet scent of lilies that were offered. I bought some flowers too, and laid them on the iron safe which contains the Buddha relics from Peshawur. The relics rest beside the great image in the inner shrine. The Burmese themselves never put flowers there, but they quickly understood the significance of it and said that it would surely earn merit.

There are several groups of pagodas clustered round the Arakan. One is an old *thein*, or hall, built, I think, by King Min-don. Some *phoongyis*, or monks, are trying to restore it, and have already made the Buddha's throne resplendent again with coloured glass. Before it, a human skeleton was laid out on the ground, and when I asked them about it they gave me a little lecture. "See," they said, "how men lust for wealth and for women and how they fill themselves up with food. But it must all come to ruin like these poor bones. That is the Law. There is sorrow in all things. Behold this ruin and let it

check your lust to live. So shall you escape rebirth again into this unhappy state and reach *Neikban*."

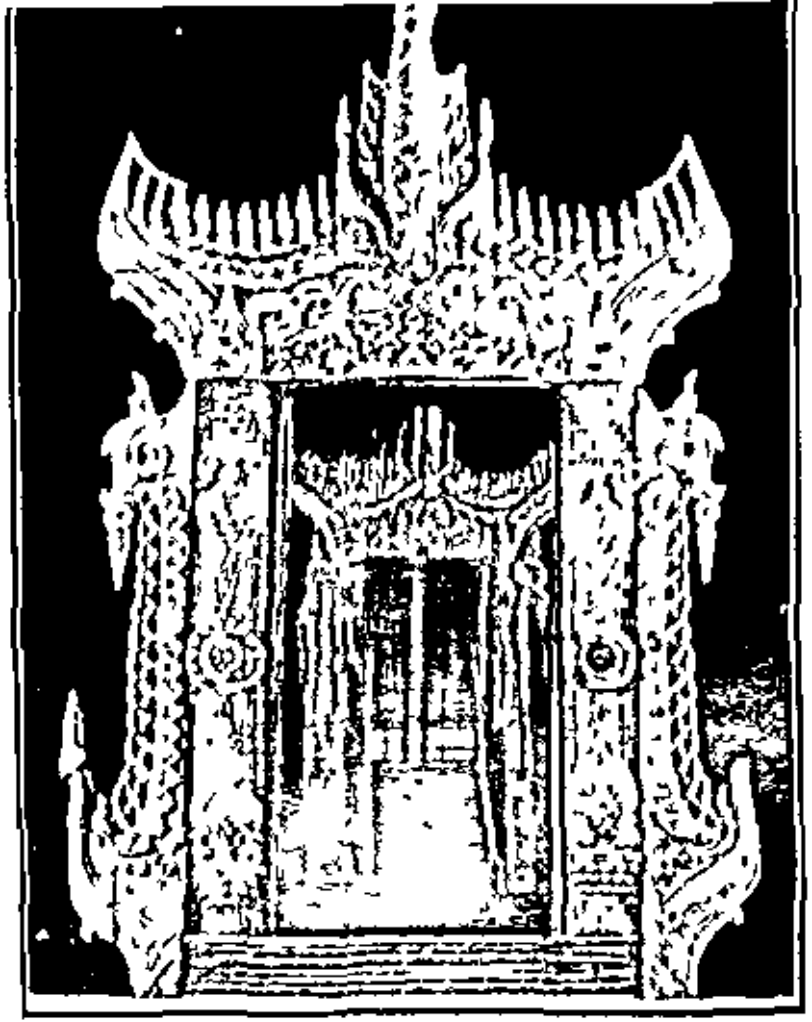
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There are two main classes of monks in Burma. These are the *Myo Gaing*, or Town branch, and the *Taw Gaing*, or Forest branch. Sagaing is said to be the stronghold of the *Taw Gaing*. They are the more austere and meditative. They live more strictly the hermit life and only instruct those who come to them seeking information. But the *Myo Gaing* who live in the towns sometimes go about preaching. The best known monk of our day is certainly the Ledi Saya-daw. He attracts enormous crowds. He preaches on the worldly vices of lust, drink, meat-eating, and unrest. He is an enthusiastic supporter of the British Government. He has immense influence. Crowds drag his carriage for him when he comes on a visit to their towns.

All *phoongyis* must keep certain precepts. But there are other rules to the number, it is said, of 800, the observance of which is voluntary. There is one obscure precept which insists upon the monk finishing the very last grain of rice he has begged, and afterwards even drinking the water with which the bowl is washed. Some monks will do nothing for themselves, even to the extent of pulling away their robe when it catches on a thorn. A monk so entangled once remained standing passive for days in the forest before some one found him. His reputation, no doubt, went forth



A *Phoongyi*, or Burmese Buddhist Monk.



A Door in Thibaw's Palace at Mandalay.

throughout the land. Naturally, these silly extravagances are a product of human folly, and very few *phoongyis* observe all these little details.

Many of them are clever men, but they seek no publicity. All are orderly and dignified, for they have renounced all the vanities, pleasures, and anxieties of this world. They seek no local or political authority. Their sovereignty is only over the hearts of the people, not over their affairs. They have no duties to perform except the voluntary ones of preaching and teaching. This has led to misunderstanding. There is, in fact, nothing like them in any other church, and there is no word in English which can describe them. They are neither monks nor priests really. The Burmese simply call them "Great Glory," for they are always a living example of piety to the people, and their quest is the attainment of that complete understanding which is *Nirvana*. They are immensely loved and reverenced, yet they seek no popularity, make no return, show no appreciation. It is just because they are holy men, because they strive to cultivate a world-embracing compassion, because they are poor and mild and benevolent, that they have gained the unlimited affection of the people.

This is the order founded by the Buddha, one of the three "jewels," or holy things, in which men "take refuge."

Sometimes criminals seek escape by "taking the robe." Some *phoongyis* are undoubtedly villains. Some

are admittedly ignorant. All that is inevitable in every human society. But the vast majority are simple pious men, weary of the world and earnestly striving to escape its ceaseless round of sorrow.

In Burmese times there was an authority under the king to examine the antecedents of *phoongyis* and exclude or expel undesirable characters. Now there is no such authority. There is a sort of Archbishop, called the *Thathana Baing*, but his influence is shadowy and is limited to Upper Burma as in Thibaw's time. There is a strong movement in favour of extending and strengthening his powers. When Government is convinced that such is really the unanimous wish of the Burmese, it will be carried out, but not until.

Healthy supervision, far from lowering the authority of the *phoongyis*, would increase it. In Burmese times a *phoongyi* could even snatch a condemned criminal from the clutches of the law and save his life. A sanctuary, or *Be-me*, still exists near the town of Myittha near Kyaukse, where, it is said, a priest once claimed even the king's prisoners when the guard unwisely brought them under escort into the sanctuary area.

A few *phoongyis* work energetically, like the *Ledi* Saya-daw. U Kan-tee, the Hermit of Mandalay Hill, has done a great deal of archæological conservation. There was once a *Phoongyi* in Thazi who preached widely upon the excellence of meditation. This man's eloquence so moved one woman that she exhumed the body of her dead husband and set up his bones, so that

every one who had known him in his strength and beauty, might see clearly to what ruin men are reduced, and might meditate before these loved bones upon the Law of Impermanence. For Impermanence, properly understood, teaches men to escape from sorrow, and to cheat death at last of its recurring victories.

* * * * * *

The Burmese have a regular ceremony for cheating death on certain urgent occasions. It appeals no doubt to very simple and superstitious folk. When a man appears to be dying, a figure is sometimes made up to represent him. It is dressed in his clothes. Some of his hair or finger nail cuttings are also attached. The relatives whisper loudly "he is dead, he is dead"; *but the sick man is kept in ignorance of these rites.* The figure is placed in its coffin. The mourners, and the monk who repeats the usual passages at the graveside, are allowed to think they really *are* attending a funeral. Thus it is hoped that the Angel of Death too will be cheated of his victim. The ceremony is probably very rare.

The Burmese have all sorts of quaint little superstitions. The flowers they offer at the shrines must not be smelt. Candles when lit before the Buddhas must not again be extinguished. Like the Japanese, they reverence all paper that has writing upon it—for until a few years ago, it was chiefly religious matters which were written about.

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Many quaint ideas find expression in a Burmese letter. The following three extracts are taken from the letters of quite uneducated men, which were sent me at different times. I think they possess considerable charm. In translating them I have sought expert assistance, for sometimes sentences are strung all together, while at other times the whole sense is contained in one single word. The first example is part of a letter from my servant Maung Po Myit, written as a greeting at the festival of *Tha-din-gyut*, which brings the Buddhist Lent to an end.

It is addressed:—"Letter to go. Loimwe town living, Chief of War. An-ree-keh *Thakin*. To give."

"My Lord. I, Maung Po Myit, respectfully *shiko* and ask your Honour's patience. On this, the full moon day, of *Tha-din-gyut*, according to Burmese custom, I come and bow and make an offering. May you be happy, and free from evil, and be cool as a golden lotus sprinkled with water.

My Lord. I, Maung Po Myit, serve at your Honour's feet. I depend upon you as upon my parents without any difference. And since I know that you treat me as your son without any difference, I can shelter at your feet. The greatness of the benefits with which you sustain me may be compared with the greatness of Mount Meru. My gratitude is equal to the prayer called *Anandaw Ananda*. The thanks I offer you are without end."

The *Anandaw Ananda*, above referred to, is a passage which many Buddhists repeat daily, finding much benefit in it. It is translated thus :—

> Praise and gratitude to the Buddha.
> Praise and gratitude to the Law of Buddha (*Dhamma*).
> Praise and gratitude to the Priesthood (*Sanga*).
> Praise and gratitude to Mother and Father.
> Praise and gratitude to Teachers.

The following letter is from Maung Po Toon, who was given temporary employment, not because he was wanted, but because he was out of work and destitute.

"My Lord. I, Maung Po Toon, respectfully *shiko* and crave your patience. My earnest wishes are that you may be free from all evil, and the 96 diseases, and that you may not come to any harm. May you bloom like the golden *Padom-ma* lotus. Evil is distant from me also because of the benefits received from you. I, who am clothed and sheltered at your Honour's feet, thank you extremely, with endless special thanks. The benefit that your Honour has derived, because you helped, uplifted, and maintained a poor human like me, is that your prosperity has increased. I pray continually night and day with the silver conch, and wish that your Honour may attain the wealth of *Zaw Tika*, the rich man, for the help you have given to my hand and body. The thanks of me, Maung Po Toon, are different to the thanks of other people."

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While I was stopping in Mandalay I dined one evening with my friend Taw Sein Ko, who has been for many years the Government Archæologist in Burma. On this occasion he gave me a Chinese dinner for my special instruction in Celestial culinary affairs. There were innumerable courses, each consisting of four or five dishes. There was no salt in any one of them, and they all tasted to me exactly alike. I was full after the first, and knew not how many more were to follow. It differed from a Japanese meal chiefly in this, that there was no rice at all, all through. We had all sorts of fish, old and new, fresh and cured. They all tasted alike. There was *chow chow* of macaroni and fish, which I liked and chased, but found impossible to catch in appreciable quantities with chop sticks. There were black eggs; and at the very end a dish of pork and dates. However, man does not live by food alone: and in this case I fared well on the clever conversation of my host.

Taw Sein Ko is quite one of the most remarkable Chinamen now in Burma. His keen intellect, his philosophy, and the interest he has taken in Burmese affairs, have earned him a wide reputation. He is a native of Amoy, his father having been engaged in coastal shipping in about 1840 and until steam transport destroyed that trade. He landed in Moulmein and settled there. His son Taw Sein Ko was born in 1864. They lived in Mandalay in King Mindon's time, and then in Bhamo, where his father died when

The following is the usual polite opening of a friendly letter to a superior.

"My Lord. I, Maung Khin, respectfully crave your patience, My Master. Because of your Honour's kind wishes I am cool and healthy as a *Padom-ma* lotus sprinkled with water. I, who have the 520 kinds of love for you (you who are like Mount Meru), pray and send good wishes to you without break night and day, offering also the leaves of the *Thabyeh* and banyan trees.

Because of the merit acquired in times gone past by you and me in dedicating with drops of water, and by hearing the scriptures together, I, who am but poor, meet you in this life as my master. Because of the benefits you have heaped upon me I am able to live happily in peace of mind and body."

The mention made of the leaves of the *Thabyeh* and banyan trees refers to the custom of placing vases full of these leaves in houses and upon altars. They are supposed to be cool, and ensure 'coolness,' or health, in the future. Flowers ensure freshness; and offerings of candles will bring light in the lives to come.

The 520 kinds of love referred to are those with which a man is loved. Women may be loved in 1,500 ways. There are 96 kinds of evils or diseases; and 32 kinds of fortune.

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Taw Sein Ko was eleven years old. Taw Sein Ko went to Rangoon College, where his ability was soon recognised by his English, Pali, and Sanskrit instructors, who recommended him to the notice of Government, with the result that he was appointed Translator to Government when Thibaw was overthrown in 1881 and 1885. In 1892 he was sent to Cambridge, and has since been Government Archæologist and Chinese Examiner to Burma. Very soon he will retire, but he will be remembered always by his friends for his wide learning, his hospitality, and his delightful sense of humour.

After dinner we went to an "At Home" given by a Burmese official, called Maung Maung Byat (Little Mr. Flat). There were about thirty guests present—all Burmese. A harp player was engaged for their entertainment. He is rarely heard by Europeans. He was a very old man. He had played his harp at the court of Thibaw. His harp was shaped like a boat with a long curling prow. He seemed to caress it as his fingers moved across the strings. There was a pretty woman too who sang, and a *pwe* clown whom they called the Harry Lauder of Mandalay. His very laugh was infectious. Unluckily he couldn't really let himself go that night with his puns, and his play of words with double meanings. The President of the Buddhist Association was present, who was opposing the broadness and insinuation of Burmese wit. But, in spite of this restraint, Harry Lauder kept every one merry.

Mandalay is said to have lost its charm since the king was taken away. The palace, the *Centre of the Universe*, is now empty. It is carefully preserved, and is the only existing building of its kind. Its spire, its sweeping roofs, its gigantic timber columns, and the Throne of the Lion and the Duck are beautiful still—but everything is lonesome and desolate. Nothing remains of the surrounding buildings. The outer walls of the fort are a mile or more square, with pavilions all the way along the battlements. The gates have splendid titles posted up on beams. Bridges span the broad moat where lotus bloom. But the walls only enclose acres of waste land, with the palace all by itself in the middle. The streets of Mandalay have a similar decayed, forlorn appearance. Only the great market, called the Zeh-gyo, retains a Burmese atmosphere. It occupies rows of sheds which are crowded with people in the morning time. One part is reserved for fruit and flowers, and another for silks which fill the place with a rich glow of colour.

A bare, rocky hill, called Mandalay Hill, rises above the town. The hermit, U Kan Tee, who lives up there, has built steps and long covered ways from all directions. On one spur stands a new pagoda, called the Dat Daw, which is intended to enshrine the Buddha relics found in 1908 in Northern India. Higher up the hill are many other pagodas, and a great standing image with its hand stretched out towards Thibaw's Palace. There are also images of an elephant, and a deer, and a

image every evening. This *Nat* grew very fond of Mrs. Senior, and was careful to suspend all noises after lunch till the tea bell put an end to the period devoted to repose.

In Maymyo I rode through miles of woodland, round by "Laughing Waters." I went to dinners, heard the band, and met people at the bar. It is pleasant to do all these things for a little. But Maymyo is not Burma. Its gardens, the trim houses, and open green slopes reminded me rather of some settlement in British Columbia—say Duncans, in Vancouver Island. There were just the same sort of bazars in Duncans, and nearly as many natives of India.

And of course I went to see the Goteik bridge. It spans a chasm at a height of 870 feet above a river, and 320 feet above a natural bridge. Its length is 2,260 feet, its weight 4,241 tons. It is held together by 1,000,000 rivets and cost £113,000 to build and £800 to paint. And there is still more useless information about it for the special edification of Globe Trotters.

I was greatly impressed with the Goteik gorge. From its depths, slender steel piers, uplifting the roadway, rise higher and higher overhead as you descend into the chasm, until at last they look like a fine web spun across the heavens. The foliage of the gorge is beautiful. Seats have been placed at points commanding the eeriest views of the bridge. At the bottom of the chasm, the Chungzoun river roars between precipitous cliffs, and eventually enters the gloomy

partridge which were forms in which the Buddha appeared in some of his previous lives. And half way up is a group of images representing a monk, and Prince Siddattha taking silent farewell of his wife Yasodhara and his son Rahula at the moment of the "Great Renunciation." They are very realistic figures—especially that of the monk. There is also the group of the dead man, the old man, and the sick man, called in Burmese *Thu the, thu o,* and *thu nar,* whose appearance first opened the Buddha's eyes to the underlying bitterness of life. The view from this quiet hill top over Mandalay to Amarapura, with the silver Irrawaddy flowing past towards the distant pagodas of Sagaing, is very beautiful.

Out in the country beyond the *Paya Gyi,* or Arakan Pagoda, several villages are devoted exclusively to the industry of making images. One quarter only makes stone images. Another makes brass ones. There are hundreds and hundreds of Buddhas strewn along the paths. Some are finished, some still in the rough. Some are a few inches high, and others so gigantic that they will occupy a whole railway truck when they come to be delivered.

From Mandalay I went for a few days leave to Maymyo to stop with Colonel and Mrs. Senior. Their pretty garden was haunted by a *Nat.* It had been coaxed out of the big tree on the lawn, and now occupied a smaller one, where an inviting little shrine had been built for it. Here candles were placed before its

image every evening. This *Nat* grew very fond of Mrs. Senior, and was careful to suspend all noises after lunch till the tea bell put an end to the period devoted to repose.

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depths of a cavern. Small bridges have been built across the stream, and into the cave for some way. The tunnel or cave is two hundred feet broad. Most of its floor is occupied by angry waters. Several springs break from the lofty roof and fall in silvery showers of rain on to tall columns of stalagmite, which have gradually been built up by chemical deposit. There are deep, still pools of water here and there with water-scorpions moving over the floor. Bits of fossilized wood litter the ground. Thousands of martins and bats whirl in circles beneath the dome of the roof. The roar of the river is overwhelming as it thunders down into the bowels of the earth.

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After the conclusion of my short leave I went to Meiktila, where I remained a few weeks until transferred again to Loimwe. Meiktila is one of the best places I have seen in Burma. It lies round the shores of a big lake which is believed to have been built by order of King Alaung Sithu, and was repaired by King Bodaw Paya. It is said that men were buried alive under its great embankments. Such sacrifices undoubtedly occurred in Burma until modern times. There are legends of men being buried alive under the Ananda Pagoda at Pugan, and also under the four corner bastions of the Palace walls at Mandalay.

The lake at Meiktila is quite free from weeds. No lotus grow in it. Some people attribute this to the

depth of the water and to the fact that it is continually fed by fresh springs, but the real reason is that lotus were specially forbidden to grow there by a *Nat*. There are several little *Nat* houses round about, where Mee-paya, the *Nat* Princess, and Min Byu Shin, the 'Prince of the White Horse,' are enshrined. One of the *Nats*, who lives in a little shrine near the Civil Hospital, is said to be the deified Shan Queen of King Alaung Sithu, who died here while the king was planning the lake.

Min Byu Shin, the 'Master of the White Horse,' is the Guardian Saint of Upper Burma. With other *Nats* he is found in *Nat* shrines all over the country. He always rides upon his horse. According to the legend about him, he was in his life-time the groom of a prince of Pugan. This prince was appointed to the governorship of a distant province. He suspected that this appointment was only a ruse of the king to separate him from his lovely wife, who he could not take with him. So he left the groom behind to watch. And sure enough, the king soon began to make love to the princess. So Min Byu Shin rode off to warn his master. When night came on he saw a lake gleaming before him. It was impossible to proceed. So he lay down and waited for dawn. When it was light he saw that there was no lake at all, but only white, dry sand, which had glittered in the moonlight. The prince was so furious at the delay, that he killed the faithful Min Byu Shin. But the fidelity of that servant has

never been forgotten and has earned him the love and respect of the people. He is to this day the acknowledged Guardian Saint of Upper Burma.

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There was once a large British garrison at Meiktila, but at this time only a wing of the Somerset L. I. Territorials remained. So there were plenty of fine houses standing empty to choose from. It was very pleasant out on the lake in the calm evening time. During the day there was usually a strong cool wind, which died away at sunset and got up again late at night. Meiktila, like Maymyo, is more or less a European creation. Burmese atmosphere is therefore wanting. But I was able from there to explore some of the most fascinating parts of Burma. Some of these expeditions were to Amarapura, Ava, Sagaing, and Shwebo, which at different times were the capitals of the Alaung-Paya dynasty. I shall describe them in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

Capitals of the Alaung-Paya Dynasty.

The information collected in this chapter is gathered partly from existing literature. But the greater portion has been obtained personally on the spot and with considerable labour from the elders of villages whose traditions appear as a rule to be historically accurate. My object is to remove in a slight degree the confusion of existing fragmentary accounts of Shwebo, Sagaing, Ava, and Amarapura.

Shwebo.

Shwebo has no less than six names. Originally it appears to have been called Yan-gyi-aung and Kon-baung. In the time of King Alaung-Paya, before he had made it the capital of an empire, it was a small town called Mokso-bo (the Hunter Chief), or Sek-daw. Both names refer to a hunter called Nga Po, from whom Alaung-Paya traced his descent. That name is still preserved in the adjoining railway station of Mokso-chyun,' the teak (tree) of the hunter.' When Alaung-Paya rose from the position of a village underling to that of a national leader in 1753 and rid Upper Burma of its Talaing invaders, he made Mokso-bo

his capital; and returning there from his successful wars built a palace whose moat and fortifications still exist. He changed the name to Ya-ta-na Thein-ga. The town was finally called Shwebo or 'Golden Chief,' in about 1837 A.D., by King Tharrawaddy Min, one of whose titles was Shwebo Min. 'Shwebo was only the capital of *all* Burma in Alaung-Paya's reign. His son and successor, Naung-daw-gyi, moved to Sagaing. *His* successor, Sin-byu-Shin, returned to Shwebo at once, but abandoned it two years later (in about 1765 A.D.) in favour of Ava. But Shwebo never ceased to exercise an important influence over the destinies of Burma. There was a superstition that its soil was lucky, and Sin-byu-Shin carried some of it away with him to Ava. It was believed that good fortune would attend campaigns planned at Shwebo. Anawratta (1010-1052 A. D.), the greatest of all Burmese kings, who founded the magnificent dynasty of Pugan, is said to have been a native of Pauk-kan, where there is now a little railway station, half way between Sagaing and Shwebo. Later, the same good fortune attended Alaung-Paya. He rose from an insignificant position and founded an empire which was only overthrown by the British at annexation. King Tharrawaddy purposely came to Shwebo, in about 1837, to plan his successful plot to depose his half brother Ba-gyi-daw; and Mindon Min likewise made his preparations there for the overthrow, in 1852, of *his* brother, Pugan Min. Thus Shwebo has ever played the part of King-Maker,

for its men were the nucleus of the Burmese armies of that period. When Alaung-Paya's dynasty was overthrown, it was at Shwebo especially that British troops had to be stationed to deal with the outbreak of dacoity; and they have remained there ever since.

The memory of Alaung-Paya is beloved still. He is never spoken of in Shwebo by any other name than Oo-aung-ze-ya which means 'Conquering Victory.' That was what he was called before he assumed the ambitious title of Alaung-Paya—the 'Incarnation of Buddha.' And when at last he died after a brief and brilliant reign, he was carried back from the scene of distant victories in Siam and laid to rest in his native soil at Mokso-bo. His grave is near the present court house. Unlike the nameless brick tombs of his successors, his grave is a wooden pavilion, beneath which lies a stone inscribed in English and Burmese. There is one mistake in spelling and one in grammar in the rough English text. His memory is cherished above that of all other kings, and festivals are held at the white bell-shaped pagoda of Shwe Chet-Chyo—the 'Pagoda of the Golden Navel String,'—which he built near his palace. The inscription on the simple tomb of this great and lovable man reads thus:—"In memory of the Burmese King Alaung-Paya, who founded the first dynasty that ruled the whole of Burma. Died *on* the 8th year of his reign during the invasion of Siam A.D. 1761. Aged 46. His remains *ware* brought back to his capital at Shwebo for interment."

Of course, nothing remains of the palace now. But the inner and outer walls of the fort can still be traced; though they are mere mounds of brick. However, the moat is still broad. In some places it is a clear stretch of water. In others it is covered with lotus. There is a fine bell-shaped pagoda at one corner of the wall, in the right angle of the moat. Its commanding situation is described by its name, the Myo-Daun-Paya —the 'City Corner Pagoda.' It has lately been completely restored by a Shwebo merchant. A great many other shrines also have been put into repair—though not always with good taste. The Chyan-tha-gyi and the Chyan-tha-ya are examples. The wood carving—*though it sounds Irish to say so—is tin.* But at any rate the buildings have been given a new lease of life. There is merit in that—and one hopes that Time will swiftly obliterate the tin enormities. The restoration in the adjacent Shwe-ta-za appears, from inscriptions on the pillars, to date from Burmese times, and is a striking contrast to the crude modern development of taste. The decoration in gold-leaf and small bits of glass—a style peculiar to Shwebo—is exquisite. If an English-Vernacular education really degrades a once artistic mind to the level of painted tin, it should be knocked on the head, along with intending *da-ya-kas*.[1]

[1] Founders, or Restorers.

Although Alaung-Paya's successors deserted Shwebo, they were careful to keep in touch with it. To do so, Mindon-Min built a pagoda called the Don Min which lies a little way out in the country, and is one of the most charming shrines in Shwebo. It is of the bell shape, or Talaing type, and rises with particular grace upon a complicated plinth. It is white-washed and well kept. It is surrounded with flowering shrubs, and there is a large Buddha seated in a shed.

On the altar of the Shwe-baw-chyan-paya is a small image of the *Yahan*, or Saint, Shin-thee-wa-lee. This image, which is very commonly seen all over Burma, is more often found in private houses than in pagodas. It is supposed to be lucky, and preserves the house from theft and fire. The only other building of interest in Shwebo is the Shwe Thein-daw Paya which has a rail of stone pillars round it, like that round the Kaung Hmu-Daw at Sagaing. Here, again, the gold and glass decoration is beautiful, and there is an exhortation made to the charitable, which says that "to gild the robe of the *Myat Zwa Paya* (Buddha) of Shwe Thein-daw is a very pious deed. Let *Nats* and men cry *thadu* (well done)."

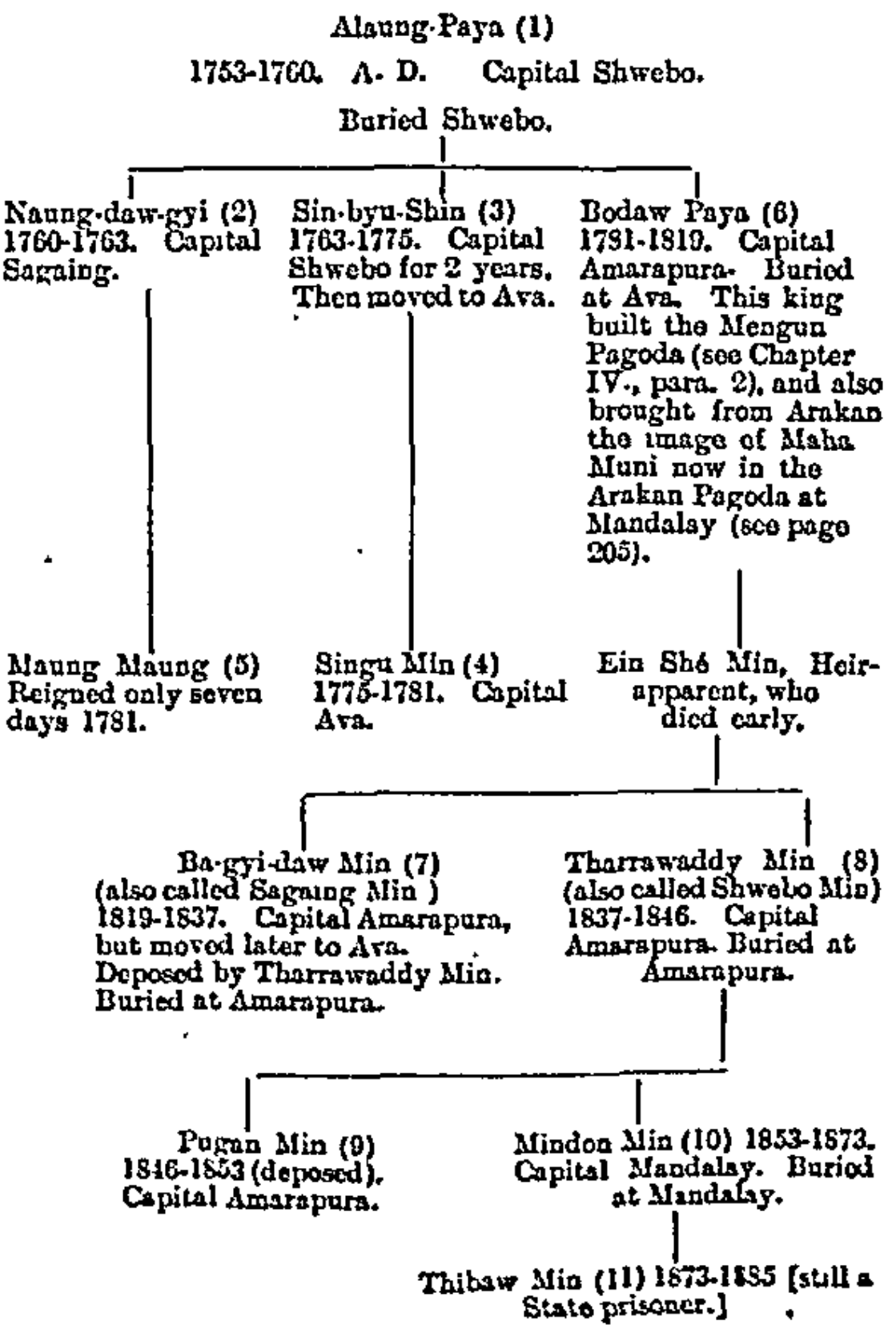
About a mile outside the palace walls is a large lake called the Maha-nanda. It is a fine expanse of water, held up by embankments and surrounded by trees. It is said to have been made, or improved, by Alaung-Paya. There is a sluice, through which the water flows out, past lines of *Belus*, *Kalons*

and *Nagās* (*demons, birds and snake gods*), into the rice-fields beyond.

Sagaing.

Upon the death of Alaung-Paya, his son Naung-daw-gyi (1760-1763 A.D.) moved his capital to Sagaing. The following table shows the kings of the Alaung-Paya dynasty, the order in which they succeeded, their capitals, and the dates of their reigns. It is possible that the reader may be glad to refresh his memory, before proceeding to examine the new capitals.

THE ALAUNG-PAYA DYNASTY.



The pagodas of Sagaing are of great variety, and show traces of many widely different influences. There are the bell-shaped pagodas of Talaing origin. Others with a square block above the dome show the influence of Ceylon. The cube pagodas are traced from Orissa, and those with straight terrace-roofs from Nepaul; while the squat or hemispherical are archaic in type, but are found very frequently, being copies of the adjacent Kaung Hmu-Daw, to which reference will be made presently. The ruins which begin at Sagaing continue thickly over the low hills along the right bank of the Irrawaddy for six or seven miles—indeed, almost to a point opposite Mandalay.

The hills behind Sagaing are covered with pagodas. Long flights of steps lead up the slopes to the most important shrines, such as the Panya Zedi, and the Shin-ma-nan-kain which crown the two extremities of the ridge above Sagaing. Sheet-iron roofs are gradually being put up over the stairways. For this object subscriptions are asked. In accordance with the usual custom, the donor's name is written up inside the gable, along with some pious sentiment:—"Presented by Ma Shwe, flower-seller, of the town of Mandalay. May this act of merit be shared by all the world of men, as well as by *Nats* and Gods."

A well-known hermit called Oo-ah-re-ya Wan-tha lives at the foot of one of these long stairways in a small cave monastery, called the Da-nu-byu-kyaung. He is a particularly charming young *phoongyi*, who lives

here in close retreat in his cave, removed from all the distractions of the world beyond. They are good, devoted men, some of our *phoongyis* of Upper Burma. This hermit passes his day in study. Seated before a skeleton, he meditates on the vanity of lust. Thus he understands "Sorrow," and the "Escape from Sorrow," and comprehends the folly of worldly pleasures, which give so little real comfort. So, with clear understanding and an unbroken peace of mind, this monk looks cheerfully upon life with the true happy composure of the Buddha.

It is a long climb up to the Panya Zedi at the top of the hill, but charitable people have placed seats here and there, and jars of fresh water. No one has to beg for such charities, which are freely contributed. There is an alms box. But no one watches by it. All give without being asked. From the top of the hill you look down upon dense foliage of Gold Mohur trees, and upon the pagodas of Sagaing; and thence across the broad Irrawaddy to the still more restful trees and ruins of Ava and Amarapura. Still further up the river is Mandalay, and the spire of the Arakan Pagoda, and the new Dat-daw Pagoda on Mandalay hill. All the five capitals of the Alaung-Paya kings (except Shwebo) lie before you. It is a beautiful, wide view; and one lingers contentedly on some quiet seat, listening to the breeze breathing over the bells of a spire. Groups of wooden figures stand about the pagoda, illustrating obscure stories of Lo-ta-ka Mokso, as well as the better known ones of the Buddha's memorable drive

Down below, on the plain near the town, there are many shrines of which the finest is the Nga-dat-gyi. A roofed corridor and a long flight of steps lead to the high platform, upon which stands a wooden pagoda. It is supported inside by magnificent, gilded teak pillars. This pagoda is seventeenth century, having been built by King Thado Dhamma Raja (1631 A.D.), or by his son. A gigantic Buddha, seated in the "*earth touching attitude*," rests in the gloom, gazing down on the people who place flowers or candles before it on the altar. High up in the darkened roof there is a soft whirring of bats' wings.

In this part of Burma there are scores of dumpy, hemispherical pagodas which are all copies of, and all named after, the famous Kaung Hmu-Daw, near Sagaing. As a matter of fact small pagodas built in pagoda courts are very often copies of some more or less celebrated shrine. Near the Du-ba-yon-zedi a number of inscriptions in the square (and therefore old) script have been collected in a shed from all over Sagaing. Inscriptions in round characters are modern, and are never more than one hundred, or one hundred and twenty, years old.

Several pagodas near the river have had to be removed in order to clear a site for the proposed railway bridge across the Irrawaddy. The Shwe-byi-seik-oo is one. The relics it contained, plus a few clocks, are now enshrined in a new so called "pagoda," called the Ganda-ku-tee Taik. Every possible crime has here been

committed against pagoda art. One shudders again at the education which suggests the building of modern pagodas on the design of a Parsee's shop-front. Near the proposed bridge-head is a small monastery called the Sagu Hmaw Kyaung which means 'the Whirl-pool Monastery of Sagu.' Beside it is the Yatana Oo, 'Head jewel,' a little, old shrine, which has lately become famous on account of a python, which was allowed to roam about free. People gave the pious snake eggs to eat. Profoundly mistrusting even holy pythons, we entered the building with as much caution as if it were full of Germans—till an overpowering stench drew our attention to the fact that the snake which was wound round an image on the altar was dead, and had been so for some time. Its eggs lay beside it on a tray, and one sincerely hopes they never hatched out. The python was fixed in position with a little cement, and what she smelt like a month later, only the exceedingly pious can tell.

There is another large group of pagodas thickly covering some low hills near the railway station. The two central shrines, the Thi-sa Zedi and the Ka-we-taun-Mya Zi Kun, are the chief landmarks of Sagaing from across the river. The pagodas of this group are so numerous, so close packed, and so varied in type, that it is impossible to describe them in detail.

One of the largest pagodas in Sagaing is the Sin-mya-Shin—'The Owner of many Elephants.' It was built by King Sin-byu Shin (1763-1775). His own title

of the two telegraph masts, conspicuous landmarks to travellers between Sagaing and Mandalay, but the above legend concerning them may perhaps not be generally known.

Long long ago—so it is said—a king of Tagaung had two blind sons. They were named Sula-tha-ma-wa and Maha-tha-ma-wa. They were placed on a raft and set adrift down the Irrawaddy. At one time their raft caught up on an acacia branch, and the town of *Sagaing* now derives its name from this incident—*Sik*, acacia; *kaing*, a branch.

Other places are also named after this mythical voyage of the blind princes. The female demon *Beluma*, taking advantage of their blindness, tried to steal their supply of food. But one of the brothers seized her wrist, and threatened to cut it off until she promised to cure their blindness. The cure began at Sagu (*Sa*, beginning; *Ku*, cure). Salin (*Sa*, beginning; *lin*, light) was the place where the light began to fill their eyes. The legend goes on to say that the princes were given enough ground near Prome to spread their skins on, and there founded the kingdom of Tha-yea Kit-ta-ya. (*Tha-yea*, skin; *Kit-ta-ya*, space).

According to Phayre, Sagaing first became an independent State in 1359 A.D., when Athengkhara turned it from a Burmese province into a separate kingdom, which extended north to the Manipur border. This was a Shan dynasty, and lasted for 49 years. The story of struggles for the throne is very complicated.

The most important king was Thado-min-paya whose ambition it was to reunite Burma. In 1361 A.D., he established a new capital at Ava, and many of the pagodas found their date from this time. All this, of course, was 400 years before Alaung-Paya's day. Beyond this point, Sagaing loses an independent history until 1634 A.D., when Thado Dhamma Raja established a capital at Ava, and celebrated the event by building a great pagoda, the Kaung Hmu-Daw—'the Good Royal Deed'—at Sagaing in 1636. In it he is said to have deposited a golden image of the same weight as himself. The Kaung Hmu-Daw is amongst the most venerable—though least beautiful—pagodas in Burma. Many miraculous stories are told about it. Its good influence arrested a Manipuri invasion in the 18th century.

The Kaung Hmu-Daw pagoda, or as it is sometimes called the Yaza Muni Su-la, is an ugly, massive dome of solid brick, without any spire. It is shaped after the style of the Indian hemispherical *stupa*, but tradition states that it was made to the model of a woman's breast. The Burmese say it is 110 arms lengths in height—the arm being measured from elbow to finger tip. In plain English it is about 250 feet high, and the circumference at the base is 1,050 feet. A distinctive feature is a row of stone pillars, 5 feet high, running round the main pagoda, making an inner walk about 15 feet broad. Each pillar has a niche for candles. The massive white dome of the Kaung Hmu-Daw looks

its best against dark storm clouds. Then, indeed, it becomes almost imposing, and assumes a certain grace and dignity where it stands amidst the wreck of old Sagaing. The country round about is littered with crumbling ruins, half hidden in the tamarind trees. Paved roads, flanked with tottering brick lions, lead up to the now deserted pagoda.

Ava.

From Sagaing and Shwebo, Sin-byu-Shin Min moved to Ava in about 1765, and the capital was either there or at Amarapura, until Mindon founded Mandalay in 1857. Altogether Ava was four times the capital. Now it is only a quiet little place, the original site being occupied by several villages. But it is the real old Burma of silk, and long hair, and tattooed legs. The people are exceptionally charming and simple. Ava might be hundreds of miles from a railway. Indeed, trains and mail boats pass it by unheeding. I felt more in touch and sympathy with the Burmese there than ever before, when the *phoongyi* of the Oak Kyaung took a lacquer image from the altar, where it had sat for a hundred years, and gave it to me. The saving of it, he explained, was a work of merit. And, indeed, the old deserted timber monastery was deep in bats' dung, and the roof was on the point of crashing down upon the beautiful Buddha still inside it. Such old and consecrated images are not to be bought, or even to be had for the asking. They are acquired only

Wethandaya.[1] Then the Earth quaked, and the air was scented; the Heavens flushed, and Buddha passed into the ecstasy of Enlightenment. It is an old story, but I let Maung Dwe tell it again in his own simple fashion. He related the story of the "Dust Offering," which was told in the sculptures of Northern India twenty-one hundred years ago, and repeated again here by this village lad under the tamarind trees of Ava.[2] What links with the past! How truthfully those old simple stories have been handed down the ages! How faithfully Buddhism has maintained its ideals in the arts! The same figure of Buddha, invented by Greeks and Indians in Peshawur 200 years B.C., is produced without alteration in Burma to-day. In this part of the country are found many sculptured groups of the *Dipankara*, which also lie by the score three feet under the soil of Northern India. But *there* the execution is better. The Buddha (then only a *Pra Laung*, or Buddha to be) is shown as a young man crouching, with hair spread out on the ground for the *Dipankara* Buddha to walk over.[3] Here (in the Mingala Zedi Pagoda of

[1] The *Wethandaya Jataka* is a story illustrating a supreme act of charity made by the Buddha in a former incarnation.

[2] The "*Dust Offering*" is a favourite subject in Buddhist sculpture. The Buddha is shown accepting a handful of dust from a child who, seized with a desire to make a gift, had nothing else to offer but dust.

[3] Many lives ago, the Buddha was a pious youth. One day he met the *Dipankara* Buddha who recognised that the youth would in time also be a Buddha. The *Jataka* story describes this meeting, and how the youth, who was himself to be the *Gautama*

Ava, and also in the Nau-paya Kyaung at Sagaing), the conventional *Dipankara* group is in six separate pieces. First a stumpy little lying figure of the *Pra Laung*,[1] with hands above the head. Next the *Dipankara* Buddha, a large standing figure. Behind him are four *Yahans*, or hermits, in decreasing size. But though the execution is different to the Indian form, the idea is the same, and like the *Mă-thon-da-ya* and the "Dust Offering," links the present with the beginning of things.

Near where the palace stood is a tower, called the "Tower of the Buddha's Tooth." It leans nearly as much as the Tower of Pisa. There are wooden steps up to its second and third story, from which there is a fine view, but the building has too severe a list to be pleasant. It was of course part of the palace, whose inner and outer walls and moat still remain, though now almost hidden in jungle. There are also two open baths, which were once supplied with water by a drain, in which we found a large snake. In an adjacent rain puddle a crab was laying its young. Half a mile beyond the palace grounds is the Lawka-tha-ya-pu Paya, a great derelict and unfinished dome of masonry, built by Thin Sa-ya Seh-yon-Paya who is apparently the same as King A-theng-kha-ya-Tsau-Ywon, mentioned by Phayre (page 283) as a king of Sagaing. This

Buddha, knelt and spread his long hair for the *Dipankara* Buddha to walk upon.

[1] A Buddha to be.

pagoda then dates from about 1815 A.D. In the case of the Kaung Hmu-Daw we have a king of Ava building his pagoda at Sagaing, which is just the opposite procedure to the Lawka-tha-ya-pu Paya, which was built at Ava by a king of Sagaing. Though unfinished, it is an immense building of the round type, rather like the Shwezigon of Pugan, and thoroughly typical of the pagodas of that period. As far as we could judge from Maung Dwe's memory, it was occupied about 27 years ago by a British force operating against some dacoits, who, by the way, were particularly active round Ava after Annexation. If these troops were as energetic at slaying dacoits as in damaging the pagoda, they should have done well. The unfinished top of the Lawka-tha-ya-pu Paya made a splendid signalling station. To reach it they carved out an unnecessarily broad staircase, which almost cuts the great building in two. It is an annoying and a thoughtless piece of vandalism. There is a very big image in an adjacent "*thein.*"[1]

The only other object of interest in Ava is a rough, white stone, set up in 1915, in memory of Judson and his wife on the site of the Let-ma-yoon Prison. The inscription describes how Judson "in this prison of horror which stood here sustained in his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the devotion of his heroic wife, endured unrecorded sufferings from June 1824

[1] Hall.

to May 1825." As a matter of fact those sufferings are not quite unrecorded. They were published privately by Henry Gouger, one of Judson's fellow prisoners, in a pamphlet circulated to members of Parliament in 1850. An extract from it is the subject of the next chapter. Let-ma-yoon was the prison for those likely to suffer death. The name means "Hand-shrink-not." A heap of fragments chipped from the stone have been purposely left near by, in the hope that American visitors will content themselves with these, and spare the monument! It is as artless an admission of American vandalism as could possibly be made.

Thada-Oo is a suburb of Ava. It lies three miles inland. It is well to sleep there in order to see the pagodas in its vicinity. It is a most delightful evening walk from Ava, along village streets, by ruins and pagodas, and over old Burmese bridges of brick and timber. There are low brick walls on each side of the road the whole way, and this viaduct is given the title of "bridge" (*tha-da*). It was built, they say, by Prince U Oh. He was a grandson of Ba-gyi-daw Paya. Where this long so-called "bridge" ends is the village of Thada-Oo, 'The head of the bridge.'

Ava is a much older site than Amarapura, and consequently its ruins belong to a much longer period of history— including as we have seen monuments as early as Kyanzittha's "Htee-Hlinc-Paya" (1057-1085 A.D.). Still more confusion rises from the changes of

capital, which were frequent and senseless, sometimes being the result of absurd omens, such as the perching of a vulture on the palace spire, which induced Ba-gyi-daw Paya to abandon Amarapura for Ava. Nevertheless, the omens, it would seem, were badly interpreted. Defeat by the British, and abdication in favour of Tharrawaddy Min, quickly followed Ba-gyi-daw's move to Ava. The transfer by King Mindon to the supposed powerful site at Mandalay did not avert the entire overthrow of Alaung Paya's house in the unhappy reign of Thibaw. At the time of such transfers, great images, immense timber monasteries, and *all other movable objects were taken away.* An example of this is the Min-tin taik Kyaung, a monastery which every one can see from the train, about 300 yards from Shanzu Station (Mandalay).[1] Though now a sad ruin it was once one of the finest of old timber monasteries. It was moved bodily first from Amarapura to Ava, and then to Mandalay. The image in the pagoda of the Ma-lon Bazaar at Mandalay was originally enshrined at the Set-chay-thee-ha Paya at Ava. This fine old shrine stands beside the Tha-da Oo road. It is now much ruined, having been half destroyed by the earthquake of 1838. It is also badly overgrown with jungle. It was built by the eldest son of Nyaung Ram Min (A.D. 1599), a son of Bureng Naung of Pegu (See Phayre, p. 127). Another image

[1] The word *Shanzu* is derived from, *Shan* (the Shans); and zu (collect)—"Shans collect," *i.e.*, "Shans quarter."

was also transferred, and now adorns the Chauk-daw-gyi at Amarapura. It was moved by Pugan Min.

Nyaung Ram Min (early 16th Century) who is mentioned above is buried beside the Zanda Muni Pagoda. The site of his grave, though still known, is obliterated by ruins and jungle. It should certainly be marked with one of the usual simple pagodas which were placed over the tombs of Burmese kings. He was the founder of the Zanda Muni Paya which is a graceful, bell-shaped shrine, now thoroughly restored, white-washed, and crowned with a golden "htee." There are two inscriptions in the court near Nyaung Ram Min's grave. One is in square writing, and the other in modern round character.

The Mingala Zedi—the 'Shrine of Good Signs'—was built by King Min Kaung II. (Only one king of Ava called Min Kaung is, by the way, mentioned by Phayre.) It is now being repaired by local charity at the cost of Rs. 3,000. Funds were sought even from railway passengers at Mandalay.

Out in the country is a gigantic lying Buddha, the Shin-bin-Yaung Hlay, built by Oo-Zana-Min-tha. It lies in a fine hall, the outer verandah of which is being repaired by the villagers at their own expense. The figure is 70 arms' length long.

Not far from it is a ruin called the "Four Golden Caves".[1] It is a small shrine, with a hall or "cave"

[1] Shwe Ku-leh-loan Paya.

built on to each of its four faces. No man knows its history. Its appearance is archaic, and the pagoda is worthy of expert examination. A local saw-mill owner, called Ko Po Ku, is restoring it, and has undoubtedly saved it from collapse.

The frequent mention made above of repairs and restorations finally disproves, I think, the popular myth that the Burmese never repair old pagodas; that there is no merit in such restorations; or if there is that it belongs to the original founder. At Amarapura I found the Pato-daw-gyi being repaired privately. In Ava I have mentioned three works in progress. The many old shrines all over the country do not remain white, and crown themselves, but are restored privately from time to time as they require it. There is no question of benefiting the original founder, whose very name, as in the case of the "Four Golden Caves," may have been forgotten. The motive of such repairs is to earn merit and to honour the memory of the Buddha.

The classical Pali name of Ava is Ratanapura, the "City of Gems." It is now called In-wa in Burmese. The name of Ava, or Awa, still sticks to the last Burmese capital at Mandalay in the Chinese language, in which Mandalay is called *Wa-cheng*, or the 'Walled City of *Wa* (or *Awa*).'

At Tha-da Oo that evening some one lit innumerable candles and placed them amongst the trees. It was very wasteful, because there was no one there to see—

but it is just such little acts as this that give Burma its subtle charm. Every wave of night-air breathed the faint music of swinging bells, and some one was beating a soft-toned gong.

Amarapura.

At Amarapura you get back to the railway. It is the line which runs eventually to Myitkyina. On the way we drew up with a jerk to awaken a Burman who was asleep across the line. From the nasty way he took what the driver had to say to him, it appeared that he was annoyed at being thus disturbed; and since it is the established habit of the 'Myitkyina Mail' to "breakfast at tea, and dine on the following day," I must say I sympathized with him.

The little rest-house at Amarapura happened to be in a state of siege. In Burma people have a way of forcing their business most heartlessly upon their neighbours. Throughout the live-long day—and office hours happen to clash distressingly with my sacred daily sleep—the only table was spread with dusty tomes and files, the only floor with litigants. Witnesses strained to catch the drift of evidence from their place of internment in the bathroom. There was a murderer on the stairs, and a Co-operative Society under the long chair, where I sat deeply conscious of my own insignificance in the (pyjama-ed) "presence." Reading, work, and repose were alike impossible, and the whole noisy proceeding boring beyond words.

Outside in the shade of the tamarind groves it was very different. The repose of ages seemed to haunt their quiet shadows. There are mango trees, and peepul, and tall toddy palms too; but it is the tamarind, spread luxuriantly over the flat country, or planted in long avenues by dead kings, or shading villages and ruins, which give Amarapura its restful charm. Silk-weaving is the chief occupation of the quiet street. The little modern village passes imperceptibly into the old Burmese capital, whose innumerable pagodas, ruins, and lions stand beside the road in the cool depths of tamarind shade. The great shrine of Amarapura is the Pato-daw-gyi, which was built by Ba-gyi-daw in 1818. One of his descendants, now a magistrate in Amarapura, was adding a pavement to the pagoda. The Pato-daw-gyi is rightly considered one of the most shapely and graceful pagodas in Upper Burma. In the quiet evening sunshine its grey walls and bell-shaped dome possess great dignity. There are about 500 little *Jataka* plaques let into the masonry all round.[1] The surrounding court is covered with lawns. Near one of the gates King Ba-gyi-daw had collected a large number of inscribed stones from all parts of the country. The value of this library has only lately been realised, and an Epigraphical Department established, which will one day unlock much information from these dusty stones. Beside the opposite gate is a

[1] A "Jataka plaque" is a clay brick, with a picture upon it of one of the Buddha's former lives.

very big swinging bell with the correspondingly bulky name of *Maha meh-yu-ma-ku-ta-kan-gaza-thein-nga-thaun*. Beyond, spreads the Taun-ta-man Lake, a large expanse of water, about which Amarapura is built. On the opposite bank the spire of the Chauk-daw-gyi rises from the palm trees, and a very old timber bridge crosses the lake to it. The lake is fed at high water by the Irrawaddy. Overlooking this beautiful scene is the Paya Nee, which seems to have anticipated the "Futurist" style. Its rounded shoulders and quaint lines are quite unconventional. Like so many small pagodas it contains a surprisingly large image—a great standing Buddha with graceful drapery. Its features are hardly visible in the gloom of the roof. It is 18 arms' length high. The carved wooden door at the entrance is also curious. Its panels are decorated with shields, and heads of stags, griffins, and eagles, strangely suggestive of English heraldic plates. The pagoda was the work of the same architect who built both the Pato-daw-gyi and Chauk-daw-gyi for King Ba-gyi-daw.

The bullock-cart—for such is our mode of conveyance—creeps on along the lake to the old moat and walls of the palace. At each of the four corners of the palace walls is a pagoda about 100 feet high. These four pagodas are called the Shwe Lin Bin, Shwe Ku-gyi, Shwe Kon Chya, and Shwe Zedi. *Shwe* means golden. A brick council house and an armoury are all that remain of the palace, but near the site are the tombs of

three kings of the Alaung-Paya dynasty, namely,—*Bodaw-Paya, Ba-gyi-daw, and Tharrawaddy Min* (Shwebo Min). Ba-gyi-daw's tomb is called locally "Naung-daw-gyi," and must not be confused with the *king of that name* (the *second* of the Alaung-Paya dynasty), who ruled at Sagaing. The tombs of these three kings—great kings they are counted in Burmese history—are remarkable for their complete simplicity. They are nameless. Each is a plain white-washed brick pagoda. That of Shwebo Min is hardly 16 feet high. That of Bodaw-Paya is only a little bigger. There is a striking disproportion between this king's grave *and his Mengun Pagoda, which he intended to be the* greatest in the world. The insignificance of these tombs lead one to doubt whether pagoda building was really purely an act of personal vanity as we are apt to conclude. If we examine Bodaw-Paya's history and character, we find that he was undoubtedly apprehensive about his ugly record of violence, and was conscious of the urgent necessity for counterbalancing these evils with important works of merit. Men who build only for vanity provide themselves with splendid tombs. Egypt, India, and China are full of such efforts to defeat the Law of Transiency. Yet these Burmese kings built no such tombs, and so in their pagoda building we must credit them with motives of piety. Ba-gyi-daw's tomb is larger and more artistic than the others. The image inside it is said to be made of silken *gaung-baungs* (head fillets), and other articles of royal clothing,

burnt and made into a sort of clay. It is a large image.

By the lake near the bridge-head is a group of pagodas, one of which is shaped like, and named after, the Kaung-Hmu Daw of Sagaing. A giant Buddha also sits out in the open amongst the ruins, gazing over the lake. From here, the bridge, which is called the U Bein Thada, crosses the lake to the Chauk-daw-gyi pagoda. It is more than a mile long. Though now full of holes it is still used by foot passengers. Boards have been laid on lengthwise, but the old timber below has almost withered away. It cannot last much longer. At the far end lies the village of Taun-ta-man. Amongst its dense palm groves stands the Chauk-daw-gyi, built like the Pato-daw-gyi, by King Ba-gyi-daw. But it is entirely different in style. It resembles outwardly the Ananda of Pugan, but the inside arrangement is not the same. It has lofty square pillars and broad colonnades, and a large image seated on a correspondingly fine *palin*, or throne.[1] Around the grassy outer court are deep verandahs, or living shelters, but most of them have now collapsed.

Amarapura was founded in 1783 A.D. by King Bodaw-Paya, who, as mentioned, also built the Mengun Pagoda, and placed the Arakan image in the Arakan Pagoda, then in the suburbs of Amarapura. This

[1] This image, as already mentioned, was transferred to its present site from Ava by Pugan Min. (See top p. 243.)

king also repaired the lake at Meiktila, which had formerly been constructed by Alaung Sithu in the 12th Century. As already mentioned, these works of merit were intended to atone for much bloodshed. Successions were not as simple as one might suppose from the table given at the beginning of this chapter. Thibaw stepped to the throne across a whole trench full of dead brothers. Bodaw-Paya had 166 children—99 sons and 67 daughters. Yet it was a grandson who succeeded him. He had 113 grandsons, and 80 granddaughters, and 433 great-grandchildren.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Let-ma-yoon Prison at Ava.

(*A tale of the Burmese War of* 1824.)

In the last chapter I described the site of the Let-ma-yoon Prison at Ava, now marked by the Judson Memorial.[1] The following extracts are taken from a letter, dated December 31st, 1849, which has lately come into my possession. It was printed for private circulation, and was submitted to the Honourable East India Company by Henry Gouger, who, in 1824, fell into the hands of the king of Ava, when war broke out in that year between the Burmese and British. Henry Gouger's story is not only thrillingly told, but it throws a lurid light on prison life under the Burmese monarchy. When our Burmese friends generously admit the benefits conferred on them by British rule, they do not perhaps fully realise the extent of it. Parts of this story show what Burmese themselves endured in the old State prisons of Ava; and whatever may be the weakness of our own prisons, the inmates at any rate suffer none of the horrors now to be related.

At the outbreak of the war, Mr. Gouger, who was a wealthy merchant, was residing at Ava. Apparently

[1] Page 240.

no effort was made by Government to warn British subjects of impending hostilities. Consequently, Mr. Gouger and several others, including two Americans, were seized. Mr. Gouger lost the whole of his fortune, which consisted of a lakh of rupees, of which Rs. 60,000 was borrowed. He remained two years in prison, and at the end found himself beggared by the interest on the borrowed money. But it was not until 1849, when he was again ruined in some other business failure, that he appealed for compensation for his losses in the Burmese War. Whether he got anything or not I cannot say, but his appeal is certainly pathetic. News of the capture of Rangoon reached Ava on the 18th of May, 1824. The excitement among all classes was extreme. Long unaccustomed to any reverses of fortune, the pride of the court and the people was unbounded, and victory was looked upon as certain. Gouger was soon arrested and placed in stocks in a prison, called the Taingdan (the Royal shield). After that he was removed to a prison in which prisoners likely to suffer death were placed. It was appropriately called the Let-ma-yoon (Hand-shrink-not) from the frequency and cruelty of tortures and murders perpetrated within its walls. Gouger's story can best be told in his own words.

"My heart sank within me as I entered the gate of the Let-ma-yoon prison and was delivered over to the custody of the wretches who guard the prison. They were seven or eight in number, all of them malefactors

whose lives had been spared at the place of execution on the condition of their becoming common executioners. The more hideous the crime for which he was to suffer, and the more hardened the criminal, the fitter instrument he was presumed to be for the occupation he was henceforth to follow. Such was the gang who now rudely dragged me within the gate and placed my feet in three pairs of irons. I am probably correct in my conjecture that neither you, sir, nor any of the Honourable Court have ever had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the construction of a pair of Burmese fetters, and that your imagination therefore will picture to you those wholesome restraints in which a gang of convicts are enabled to perform a day's labour with comparative comfort. My fetters were by no means of this easy construction. The iron rings, which were beaten round the ankles, were united by two links of a length barely sufficient to admit the heel of one foot to reach the toe of the other. Walking was consequently impossible, even if such exercise had been permitted, and the pain I endured in common with my fellow sufferers from this close confinement of the limbs without intermission for nearly two years may be imagined but cannot be described.

"How shall I describe the interior of that fearful prison which was destined to be my dwelling place for eleven weary months? Although it was a beautiful afternoon, between 4 and 5 o'clock, the prison was so dark that for some time I could not distinguish objects

in it. At length I discovered it to be a room forty feet long by thirty feet wide. The floor and sides were planked and raised about two or three feet from the earth by posts. The stench was such as no one can describe. I afterwards learned that since the prison had been built it had never been washed or swept, and this I can readily believe to have been the case, as during my occupancy of eleven months no attempt whatever was made to cleanse it. As may well be imagined, the place was teeming with vermin, which soon reconciled me to the loss of my clothes. Here to my surprise, I found a fellow countryman, Mr. Laird; and in a short time they brought in Mr. Rodgers, an old gentleman who had been resident 40 years in Burma; and Mr. Judson and Dr. Price. Also two Mahomedans, who we afterwards heard were placed there merely as temporary spies on our secret conversation. They were released after a day or two without having any treasonable practices to reveal.

"The hour of three o'clock in the afternoon, which was announced by the sound of a powerful gong hung in the palace, was the time at which such of the prisoners as were to suffer death, or to undergo examination by torture, usually had to meet their fate. When this solemn sound was heard, a death-like silence reigned within the prison, none of its inmates knowing whether it might not be the knell to summon him to his last account. The wicket opened, and the only intimation

the miserable object was given of his approaching fate was the direct step of the executioner to his victim, whom he seized and hurried from the prison, usually without a word. Then the door closed, and those who were left behind began to breathe more freely.

"This very day, the first of my inauguration to the mysteries of the prison of a despot, afforded a specimen of the scenes which were of almost daily occurrence. A young man had been accused of robbery in the house of a chief of rank. Whether the accusation was well grounded or not I had no opportunity of ascertaining. His guilt, although denied, appeared to be assumed, and the object of examining him by torture was to extract from him the names of those who were his accomplices. The culprit was seated on a stool, his legs bound tightly together with cords above the knee, and two poles inserted between the legs forced them apart with such exquisite pain, that the sufferer fainted. Still no confession had been wrung from him. Cold water and shampooing were resorted to, to restore animation, and preparations were made for a second attempt. The unfortunate man's fortitude was subdued, and he accused two wealthy traders as his associates. This appeared to be all that was desired, and the man was returned to his place in the prison in a piteous state. The men accused were examined, and although innocent (as the prisoner himself admitted when the torture had ceased) were no doubt compelled to purchase

immunity as usual by a liberal bribe. But the hapless prisoner was not to be so easily let off. The next day I saw him undergo a still severer torture, during which other victims were impeached, and thus the true object of the torture having been accomplished, he was no further punished, but released.

"This is a fair specimen of the cruelties which were of continual occurrence. Their punishments or tortures were varied according to the caprice of the officer before whom they were conducted. Beating various parts of the body with iron mallets, hoisting the victim up with a pulley by ropes which bound the arms behind the back, ligatures round the wrists tightened by means of a lever (a punishment practised on one of our own party) and many other ingenious contrivances were used. They were more or less severe in their character as the disposition of the official happened to lean towards mercy or cruelty. At first the effect of these barbarous practices on the minds of myself and my companions was that of unmitigated disgust and indignation, while our feelings were strongly excited by compassion for the hapless objects of this tyranny. In process of time, however (and I cannot reflect on it without a deep sense of humiliation at the degraded state of selfishness to which our nature may be brought by being familiarized with such barbarities), our minds became so hardened, and our feelings so blunted by the common recurrence of scenes of this revolting nature, that we could eat our food with the usual relish while our fellow-creatures

were writhing in agony before our eyes, their sufferings not in the least impairing our digestion.

"As day after day rolled on, we became more keenly alive to the state of utter degradation to which we were reduced. The want of water for ablution was most painfully felt, to say nothing of other usual means of cleanliness and health of which we were deprived. My body became so overrun with vermin, that with difficulty I endured the scanty clothing which I had been able to retain. When I state that for eleven months we endured sufferings from close confinement of the limbs, from want of fresh air, of water, of wholesome and regular food, of clothing, and beds; from the annoyance of vermin, from cruelties practised almost daily on the prisoners, and above all from the hourly expectation of a violent death, it will not be necessary to dwell on these subjects to convince you that a more terrible year of suffering has rarely fallen to the lot of any man to endure.

"In a few weeks a party of Bengal Sepoys, numbering about a hundred, were brought into the prison and lodged for the night. As no additional ventilation was afforded, we were fully prepared for a repetition of the tragedy of the Black Hole in Calcutta. Every one broke out into a profuse perspiration, and from the extreme difficulty in breathing during the whole night, which was felt by all the prisoners, we certainly escaped very narrowly from a like catastrophe. These men belonged to the detachment under Captain Noton, which was

unfortunately cut off at Ramoo. They were removed the following day to Banman. Eight hapless beings among them, who, expecting better treatment, represented themselves as Native Officers in the 45th Bengal Native Infantry, were on that account left in durance and in fetters with us. Their sufferings were excessive. They did not appear to possess the same moral courage or capacity of endurance which characterises the European. Only one out of the eight survived the first month.

"You will not be surprised, sir, to learn that sickness followed in the train of sufferings like this. After being three or four months in prison, I was attacked with dysentery, the consequence of irregular and insufficient diet, aided perhaps by dirt and impure air. Without medicine to relieve it, the disease made rapid progress, until my emaciated appearance excited compassion even of the hard-hearted jailors, who permitted me to sleep at night, and indeed for some weeks to live, outside the cell. One evening while lying in this deplorable condition I was abruptly informed by one of the jailors that I must at once return to the inner prison. The slight exertion exhausted me and I fell to the floor on the spot where the men deposited me. I was afterwards told the reason of this act of cruelty, which will appear hardly credible. If a prisoner dies within the walls of the inner prison, his body is rolled in a mat and carried to the adjoining graveyard. If he dies in one of the outer cells, he is buried in the same manner, but in the one case the mat is paid for by Government, in the

other the expense falls on the keepers. The value of the mat was at the most six pence. The jailors, apprehending my immediate death, and knowing I had not a farthing left, wished to save the cost of the mat.

"Providence, however, had ordered it otherwise. The prison, on the night I returned to it, was crowded to overflowing. I soon fell into a profuse perspiration and slept. From that moment I began to recover, and in all probability my restoration to health may be attributed altogether to this last act of heartless cruelty.

"At length, after various hopes and fears, dangers and escapes, circumstances occurred which put a period to our sufferings in the Let-ma-yoon, from which we were delivered on the 2nd May, 1825, after an incarceration in that prison of horrors for a space of nearly eleven months.

"On that day, about ten o'clock, some men appeared at the prison gate and demanded the white prisoners. We were instantly assembled, our fetters struck off, and ropes tied round the body of each, as is the custom when felons are led to execution. A more ghastly group was never called into the light of day. As the requisite number of jailors could not be spared, we were bound with ropes in couples, a keeper being assigned to each couple, armed with a spear for the purpose of goading us to the proper pace. My companion was Mr. Judson.

"We were driven across the Meet-nai river to the northward of Ava, not knowing our destination or the

object of our removal, except that, from the circumstances attending it, we had reason to believe we were being carried to some place of execution. Although it was the hottest period of the year, and a great part of our journey over sand, we had neither covering for the head nor for the feet. Youth and a naturally good constitution enabled me to support it better than my companion whose sufferings were extreme. We had not proceeded more than two miles on the road to Amerapoorah, when the skin from the soles of poor Mr. Judson's feet was quite burnt off. The intense heat from the sandy road, along which we were driven, made it impossible for him to proceed. Still the fear of the goad kept him onward for a time. The opportune arrival of one of my old servants, who tore a piece of cloth from his garment and bound it round his feet, enabled him to reach Amerapoorah. Here we learned that our journey was but half accomplished. We were desired to prepare to march to Oung-penlai, a village four or five miles distant. Nature, however, was exhausted, and we could walk no further. We sunk down for a few hours rest, and in the evening, seeing that even the terror of the goad could not induce us to move forward, a cart was provided which conveyed us to our destination.

"At Oung-penlai we mustered eight, by the addition of Mr. Lanciego (a Spaniard whose nationality had hitherto saved him), a native Portuguese, and a Roman Catholic priest. The prison was a lonely house beneath

which bundles of faggots had been placed, indicative, as we naturally supposed, of an intention to burn us in the building. Not a word relative to our fate could be extracted from our taciturn jailors, who seemed to take a savage delight in beholding our alarm. Hungry and faint with fatigue of the journey, we were driven into this prison, our feet having been previously fettered with three pairs of irons. They were then placed in movable stocks, which were hoisted up about three feet from the ground for the night. The whole of this night we were anxiously expecting some indication of our approaching fate. It passed, however, without incident, and in the morning we discovered our fears of burning were groundless. In this prison we killed a great number of the cobra capello at different times.

"At this period of our history, the British army had advanced to Prome, and the ablest of the Burmese generals having been signally defeated and many of them slain, the king was greatly perplexed to find any man to command his army in whom confidence could be placed. This honour at length fell on the Pacham Woon, a man of a cruel and superstitious nature, who, among other qualifications for his appointment, was notorious for his inveterate dislike to the British. He had collected a large force at Ava, and we were given to understand that we were to be sacrificed at the mustering of this army by being buried alive, a propitious omen suggested to his superstitious mind. In this agonising state of suspense we were kept for a

fortnight, the prospect of such a cruel death seeming more certain as the time drew nigh. The interposition of Providence appeared indeed miraculous. On the 29th of May, two days only before we were led to expect this tragedy, the Pacham Woon took his seat as usual at the morning council of the king. Confiding in the power with which he was invested he there urged several requests to His Majesty, totally subversive of the laws, some of which, if granted, would have left the sovereign defenceless. The king became suddenly jealous and alarmed. He gave the signal, and our dreaded tyrant, without being allowed to utter a word, was hurried from the palace to the place of execution, where he was trodden to death by elephants. Our fate depended on the fiat of this man alone. We received the news of his death with thanksgiving, and in the tumult which ensued we remained unnoticed and perhaps forgotten.

"While speaking of superstitious practices of the Burmese, I cannot refrain from giving an example of them, which, though sufficiently ridiculous, was the cause of the most intense anxiety to us for many days.

"The king was possessed of a very fine lioness, which it was said had been sent to him in an Arab ship as a present from the Imam of Muscat. One night while lying disconsolate in prison at Oung-penlai, the silence was disturbed by the distant rumbling of a heavy vehicle from which, as it neared the prison, proceeded the terrific roarings of a wild animal, which we soon discovered

to be those of the lioness. During the night we had misgivings as to the object of sending the animal to prison, for it was lodged at the entrance of our place of confinement. In the morning we ascertained that it was confined in a very large cage with strong bars on all four sides. Our jailors either could not, or would not, give us any information as to the object of the court in sending this animal to keep company with us in prison, and by this mystery seemed to encourage the idea, which was natural enough, that we were shortly to become the prey of this ferocious animal. Our alarm was increased by observing day after day that the creature was kept without food, to render it, as we supposed, more ravenous and fitter for the purpose.

"After a week the poor famished beast began to manifest signs of diminishing strength. Still no indication appeared of the fearful intent which had so long harassed our minds, and we began to entertain a hope that we had mistaken the object for which it had been sent to prison. The starving continued, and after about a fortnight the lioness died. We now learned that by some accident the Burmese has ascertained that the British arms exhibited the figure of a lion, on which the enchanters recommended the course I have related, trusting some good fortune would attend the imprisonment and starvation of the British standard.

"As the British army advanced from Prome towards the capital, successively defeating every force opposed to it, our confinement became more strict, though no

additional chains or fresh hardships were imposed, as after the first victories. After the defeat of the Burmese at Melloon, and more especially after the battle of Pugan in the month of January, 1826, which left the advance of the British army to the capital a matter of very easy accomplishment, the alarm of the court was extreme, and our situation became in the last degree perilous.

"Had the British commander pushed on his forces and invested the capital, there can be no doubt our worst fears would have been realized. But it so happened that the only course which would ensure our safety was providentially adopted. Sir A. Campbell halted at Yandaboo, about 40 miles from Ava, where a treaty was concluded. On the 16th of February, 1826, a party of men came rushing into the secluded prison where we were confined, and demanded me by name. From the hurry and coarseness of their behaviour it was long doubtful whether they were striking off my shackles for the purpose of leading me to execution, or of giving me liberty. I found it impossible to walk, for the weight of my chains and close confinement of my limbs for so long a time had effectually deprived me now of the free use of them. My presence in Ava being urgently needed, I was provided with a bullock cart. At Ava I was carried before the Mew-woon-gee, who, well aware of the cruel treatment we had undergone, appeared anxious to ascertain the nature of the report I should make of it to the British general before giving me my liberty.

So alarmed was he lest a narrative of these cruelties should incense the general and induce him to move forward to Ava, that I was compelled to promise I would prevent him from demanding the other prisoners by assuring him they had expressly refused to accompany me preferring to reside in Ava among the Burmese who had treated them so kindly. It is needless to add that I did not keep that promise very faithfully.

"On the evening of the same day I was placed in a war-boat and rapidly rowed down the Irrawaddy. It was sunset on the following evening when the welcome sight of the British flotilla of gun boats under full sail came in view. They were four miles distant. So many had been my hopes and disappointments during the last two years that I did not consider myself in safety until a shot from H. M. S. *Alligator* brought-to our war-boat.

"Thus ended an imprisonment, which, for bodily suffering and increasing anxiety of mind, has seldom been equalled. My immediate necessities (for the Burmese costume I wore was all I possessed) were relieved by the kindness of Sir Archibald Campbell, whose benevolent attentions tended greatly to restore to health a mind and body prostrated by adversity."

* * * * * *

It will be seen from the above narrative that the horrors of the Let-ma-yoon were no less diabolical than those of the Tower of London. The Burmese

have undoubtedly got a vein of cruelty in their nature. In the old days they crucified, mutilated, and flayed. At the assassinations which disgraced the opening of Thibaw's reign, the ex-Regent of Pegu had his nostrils and mouth filled with gunpowder, and was thus blown up. But damnable as these things were, they at least belonged to a violent age. Before we condemn them utterly, let us first see what misery exists still, despite our benevolent intention. Are prisoners' spleens ever split now with cunning elbow-thrusts? Do men swallow coins at great personal risk, that they may have the means in jail of buying off their tormentors? These are things which are only whispered darkly. But there is no smoke without fire.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The History of the Relics of the Exalted One.

(Found at Peshawur and deposited in Mandalay.)

On a spur of Mandalay Hill a large pagoda is being built. It is meant to enshrine the relics of the Buddha found at Peshawur, in the North-West Frontier Province of India, in 1908. To follow the remarkable story of how these relics came to be buried, and how, after twenty centuries, they were restored to the world again, it is necessary to leave Burma for a little while and turn our attention to an old mound of débris outside Peshawur City.

In our days the North-West Frontier Province of India and the hilly country beyond it, is the home of restless Pathan and Afghan tribes. Its security is only assured by means of a ceaseless round of military precautions. Every exit from the mountains round Peshawur is guarded by forts. The forts are linked together by telephones; and in addition to the regular troops in cantonments, there is an outer guard of levies, police, and militia.

But this has not always been the condition of affairs. Most of Northern India and Afghanistan belonged in ancient times to the Kushan Empire. Part of what

we now call the North-West Frontier Province was then called Gandhāra. Its capital was Pushkalavati, or as Hiuen Tsiang names it Po-lu-sha-Pu-lo, now identified with modern Peshawur. The other big towns of Gandhāra occupied sites very near to the biggest villages of the modern Province. They were celebrated throughout the world as centres of religion, art, literature, and learning. Some important Buddhist books, whose names are still known, were written here. Gandhāra was noted throughout India and China for the magnificence of its pagodas. It was the birth-place of a school of statuary which is, in a sense, still extant.

Mediæval and modern Peshawur have sprung up near that ancient site of Po-lu-sha-Pu-lo. The old site which lies to the north and east of the present city is probably still very much the same as it always was, except that, instead of pagodas, the country is thickly covered now with innumerable Mussalman tombs. The remains of that old civilization—its brick buildings, pottery, stone images, seals, gems, and coins lie only a few feet down in the soil. But on the surface there are miles of tombs and mosques, whose richly-coloured enamel tiles gleam here and there amidst the dark foliage of tamarix and cyprus. In the heart of this wilderness of graveyards is a beautiful Mogul garden, called Wazir Bagh, with long water-tanks and fountains. Here crowds have always collected on Fridays and feast days to worship at the shrines of many a saint,

ignorant of the fact that a small desolate mound of earth, not half a mile away, had contained for centuries, relics a thousand times more venerable than those of a few Mahommedan Syeds. This mound is called Shah ji Dheri, or the King's Mound, and is the site where King Kanishka buried relics of the Gautama Buddha about 2,000 years ago, and built over them a pagoda.

There has only been one pagoda of superlative importance in Northern India, and it was this pagoda of King Kanishka. It stood in an open plain, rising high above the smaller pagodas at its base, just as now the Shwe Dagon in Rangoon towers above its satellites. It was surmounted by a spire and twenty-five circlets of gilded bronze. It was adorned with bands of precious substances, and was the largest monument in India. Its circumference was nearly a quarter of a mile, and its height was variously estimated by Chinese pilgrims at from four to seven hundred feet. It possessed no less than thirteen stories, the base being of stone and the superstructure of wood.[1]

What remains of it now? Why, nothing but the Law, of which it was an ornament—the Law of Transiency. Buddhist monuments are more than ever eloquent in their decay. *A-neik-sa, Dok-kha, Anatta* is the Buddhist formula. All things are subject to death, sorrow, and destruction. The proudest monuments of kings in time are broken in pieces. This is the Law from which

[1] Sir John Marshall.

there is no escape. If you go very soon to Shah ji Dheri, before many more Rains have washed down the excavated earth, you will see for yourself the traces of that same pagoda. The ancient *stupa* has been carefully dug out. Its base is square and measures about forty yards each way. Nothing remains of all that majestic superstructure. A few stucco frescoes of Buddha figures are preserved in places, and the fragments of a few stone images. But beyond that the place is a waste, a great earthy mound formed by the rubbish of the vanished shrine, and the accumulation of twenty centuries of dust.

At what period were the relics deposited in this peaceful land of Buddhist priests, scholars, writers, and sculptors? It is not yet possible to exactly state the date, though it will undoubtedly be fixed soon. Archæological knowledge is advancing so rapidly now in India, that its problems are fast being solved, and the picture of ancient days is developing before us. Like a child's puzzle of picture blocks, the work checks its own accuracy as it is fitted together bit by bit. Yet up to the present the great Kushan Emperor Kanishka, who reigned at Pushkalavati, the capital of Gandhāra, refuses to fit comfortably into any of the various niches suggested for him. He is spoken of as "illusive Kanishka"; and illusive he will remain, until some day a newly-found coin or inscription fixes him down to his exact place in history. But roughly, he belongs to a period dating from B.C. 100 to A.D. 100.

At that time several important events—the most important events in all the history of India—had lately occurred. In B.C. 560 (or as some say B.C. 500), a prince called Siddhārtha was born in Kapilavastu in Nepaul, of the Sâkya tribe. He grew up and became the *Gautama* Buddha, and electrified the world with those wonderful teachings which have "made our Asia mild." About two centuries later, India was invaded by Alexander the Great. That invasion did not end with the retirement of his armies. Greek governors remained, who, when the empire of Alexander fell to bits, became kings in their respective provinces. Their descendants took Greek names, and struck coins with Greek inscriptions for the next three hundred years, and until long after all connection with Greece had been severed. After the invasion, the imported art of Greece found itself all of a sudden in contact with the marvellously warm, living, sympathetic zeal of the new religion; and the two inspirations—Greek and Indian—amalgamating, found expression in a school of statuary called Greco-Buddhist, which for beauty and feeling has never been equalled in Asia. Up to this time the Buddhists had never attempted to depict their Buddha in statuary. His presence in sculpture was represented by a wheel, or an empty throne. Now, however, he began to be carved, and that wonderful classic figure was evolved, whose regular brows, fine Greek nose, wavy or curly hair, sweet mouth, and exquisite poise, became so suggestive of dignity and

mental repose. This was the prototype of the Buddha figure. Thousands of them have been found in Gandhāra. Thousands more remain safe from Mahommedan iconoclasm six feet beneath the soil of Swat and Yusufzai, remnants of a great civilization in lands where now men have forgotten their Buddha, and are little better than wild beasts. The supply is almost inexhaustible. And for two thousand years in India and Burma, Tibet, China, Ceylon, Mongolia, and distant Japan, no appreciable departure from that first inspiration has been attempted. Buddha images the world over have remained true to the prototype of the Greco-Buddhist school of Gandhāra.

A little more than a century after this, all India fell under the benevolent rule of Asoka, who consolidated it under one rule as it was never consolidated before or since, until our own times. His enthusiasm and religious zeal gave a fresh impetus to Buddhist architecture. He himself built numerous *stupas*,[1] inscribed edicts on rocks, and set up pillars all over the country. He also collected together the relics of the Buddha which, after the *Mahā Parinirvāna* (or Great Decease), had been divided into eight parts and deposited in *stupas*. In the third century B.C. he redistributed them in smaller portions throughout his empire. It was one of these portions which came into Kanishka's hands in about the first century A.D., and which

[1] A *stupa* is a hemispherical monument, or burial mound.

he enshrined in a wonderful *stupa*, or pagoda, in Gandhāra.

These then were the events which had preceded the rise of Pushkalavati to the zenith of its glory. The atmosphere was charged with religious enthusiasm, which found expression in art and in building. With such culture and enlightenment, flourishing under strong rulers, well able to protect their dominions, there followed, as might be expected, a civilization in Gandhāra which has not been reached there again. In art they can produce nothing now to compare with the work of their ancient predecessors. In fact, it is a safe rule in judging the age of statuary in Peshawur to give it antiquity in proportion to its perfection. In morality there has been the same decline. To realise how miserably the people have fallen in their mode of living, one has only to compare a modern village—or even modern Peshawur city itself—with the double-storied stone buildings at Takht-i-Bhai, whose walls still stand 30 feet high after 2,000 years of decay.

These flourishing conditions reigned everywhere. At Charsadda there were other big Buddhist monuments, notably the "Eye Gift Stupa," so called because of a legend to the effect that the Buddha in a former life had given away his eyes in charity at that spot. The mound of débris at Mir Zirat Dheri has been identified with this "Eye Gift Stupa." There was also a great Buddhist city on the summit of a ridge of hills called

Takht-i-Bhai, near the present town of Mardan.[1] At Takht-i-Bhai there were monasteries with underground refectories, and shrines containing images of Kuvera and Hāriti, and the *Bodhisattvas* Avalokitesvara and Maitreya (the Buddha to come). Down in the plain was another city now buried in the mounds of Saribhalol. These mounds then, and these broken ruins, of which mention has only been made of a very few, were once Gandhāra, and such were the people who, as predecessors of the Burmese, had charge of the Buddha relics. Who shall say that Gandhāra of old was not as beautiful and charming as modern Peshawur—and much more peaceful? Then, as now, a rich green sea of wheat covered the plain in spring, while a sheen of pink and white fruit blossom spread over the city. It was in such surroundings, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsiang tells us,[2] that one day, two thousand years ago, King Kanishka while out riding came upon a white hare, which suddenly disappeared. He then saw a young shepherd boy, who was building a little *stupa* about three feet high.

The king said to him "What are you doing"?

The boy replied, "Formerly Sâkya Buddha, by his divine wisdom delivered this prophecy:—There shall be a king in this victorious land who shall erect a *stupa*, which shall contain a great portion of my bodily relics."

[1] See my "Pathan Borderland" p. 37.

[2] Buddhist Records of Western World, p. 99.

"The sacred merits," continued the shepherd boy, "of the great king (Kanishka) in former births, with his increasing fame, have made the present occasion a proper one for the fulfilment of the old prophecy. Now I am engaged for the purpose of directing you to these former predictions."

Having said this he disappeared.

The king hearing this was overjoyed. Surrounding the site of the little *stupa* which the boy had made, he built a stone *stupa*, wishing to surpass the smaller one in height to prove the power of his religious merit. But in proportion as his *stupa* increased, the other always exceeded it by three feet. So he went on till he reached 400 feet. Then he succeeded in covering the other. The king overjoyed, raised on the top of his *stupa* twenty-five circlets of gilded copper on a staff, and he placed in the middle of the *stupa* a peck of "*Sariras*" of Tathagata (Buddha), and offered them religious offering.

Scarcely had he finished when he saw the little *stupa* take its place at the south-east of the great foundation, and project from its side about half way up. The king was distressed at this, and ordered the *stupa* to be destroyed. When they had got down to the bottom of the second story, through which the other projected, immediately that one removed to its former place, and once more it surpassed in height the other.

This legend is also briefly mentioned in the To-Kwo-Ki, written by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hian in A.D. 400.

Another pilgrim to record it is Sung Yun of Tun-hwang, who was sent to India in A.D. 518, in company with the *Bhikshu* Hwei Sang, on an embassy from the Dowager-Empress Tai Han of the great Wei dynasty. This is how he describes the pagoda[1]:—"Sixty li south-west of this (*i.e.*, the place where Buddha plucked out his eyes to give in charity) there is a *Tsioh-li-feon thou* (a pagoda with a surmounting pole, identified with Shah ji Dheri). Investigating the origin of this tower, we find that when Tathagata (Buddha) was in the world he was passing through this country with his disciples on a mission of instruction; on which occasion, when delivering a discourse on the east side of the city he said, 'Three hundred years after my *Nirvana* there will be a king of this country called Ka-ni-si-ka (Kanishka). On this spot he will raise a pagoda.' Accordingly, three hundred years after that event there was a king of this country so called." Sung Yun then repeats the legend of the building already described in the words of Hiuen Tsiang. Hiuen Tsiang continues[2]:— "Outside the city (of Po-lu-sha-Pu-lo) eight or nine li (five of Hiuen Tsiang's li go to a mile) to the south-east, there is a pipala tree about 100 feet high. To the south of the pipala tree is a *stupa* built by King Kanishka. This king ascended the throne four hundred years after the *Nirvana*, and governed the whole of Jumbudvipa."

[1] Buddhist Records of the Western World, p. cliii.
[2] Buddhist Records of the Western World, p. 99.

From the time that the last of these pilgrims wrote these accounts in the seventh century, the pagoda of Kanishka, the largest monument in India, vanished completely from the face of the earth!

When Hiuen Tsiang visited it in A.D. 629 (or as some say A.D. 640), the *stupa* had then fallen into disrepair. Buddhism was declining. According to Sir John Marshall of the Archæological Department, there is an inscription of the tenth century from which one may infer that the pagoda survived the last of the Chinese pilgrims by about 300 years. The question then, which naturally troubled archæologists, was—what had become of this great building, and how had it so completely disappeared?

It has since been pointed out that much of Peshawur City was built out of it, just in the same way that part of Rome rose from the ruins of the Colosseum. Besides this it may have been partly thrown down by the marauding hosts of Mahmud of Ghazni, though most probably it never survived till his day.

There had been speculation for many years about the site of Kanishka's vanished *stupa*. The spot, if it could be found, would be of value and interest for several reasons. Firstly, it might, and probably did, still contain the relics of the Buddha. Secondly, if the pagoda was once located, it would be of use in fixing many other places mentioned by the Chinese pilgrims who were exact geographers, giving the direction and distance of each place from the one they had visited.

Shah ji Dheri had been an object of interest to archæologists ever since the early days of General Cunningham, who first suspected the nature of the mound in the sixties. Guessing that this might be the site mentioned by Hiuen Tsiang, Fa-Hian, and Sung Yun, he began to excavate with a company of Sappers under Lieutenant Cromton. A shaft was run from one side into the heart of the mound. But it was dug a little too high. Lieutenant Cromton died, and his work was suspended, when his tunnel was within twenty feet of the spot where the relic casket lay. His reports were compiled by an assistant, and were to the effect that these mounds could not possibly contain Kanishka's great *stupa*. It was then hoped that perhaps the *stupa* might be found in one of the many mounds in the adjacent district of Hashtnagar (Eight Cities), and excavations from time to time were carried out at a mound called the Bala Hissa near Charsadda, and at Mir Ziarat Dheri, which has since been proved to be the site of an almost equally celebrated pagoda known as the "Eye Gift" of the city of Shahr-i-Napursan (City of Not-Asking). Relic caskets were found in these and other big mounds, with the relics intact inside them in crystal reliquaries. They are now in the Peshawur museum. Relics placed in such large *stupas* are sure to have had some special interest, but nothing is now known of their history.

In the nineties the subject of Shah ji Dheri was seriously taken up again by M. Foucher, the distinguished

French *savant*. Having studied the country and carefully plotted out Hiuen Tsiang's line of march, he decided that modern Peshawur was indeed identical with the Po-lu-sha-Pu-lo of the pilgrim. Therefore "outside the city eight or nine li" (about a mile and a half) there should be indications of a big pagoda, and a big monastery of which also special mention was made. Just in that place there actually *were* two mounds called Shah ji Dheri.

The thread was taken up by the Archæological Department in about 1906. Dr. Spooner studied Hiuen Tsiang and confirmed the arguments of M. Foucher. The distance of the mounds from the city agreed. There were two mounds, the right distance apart, corresponding with the *stupa* and its monastery. Lastly, Dr. Spooner thought he recognised in the word *Shah ji*, a reference to some royal place—a royal *Dheri*, or mound. As a matter of fact, all these theories were perfectly correct except this last, since "*ji*" is a term used of Syeds, but never of kings.

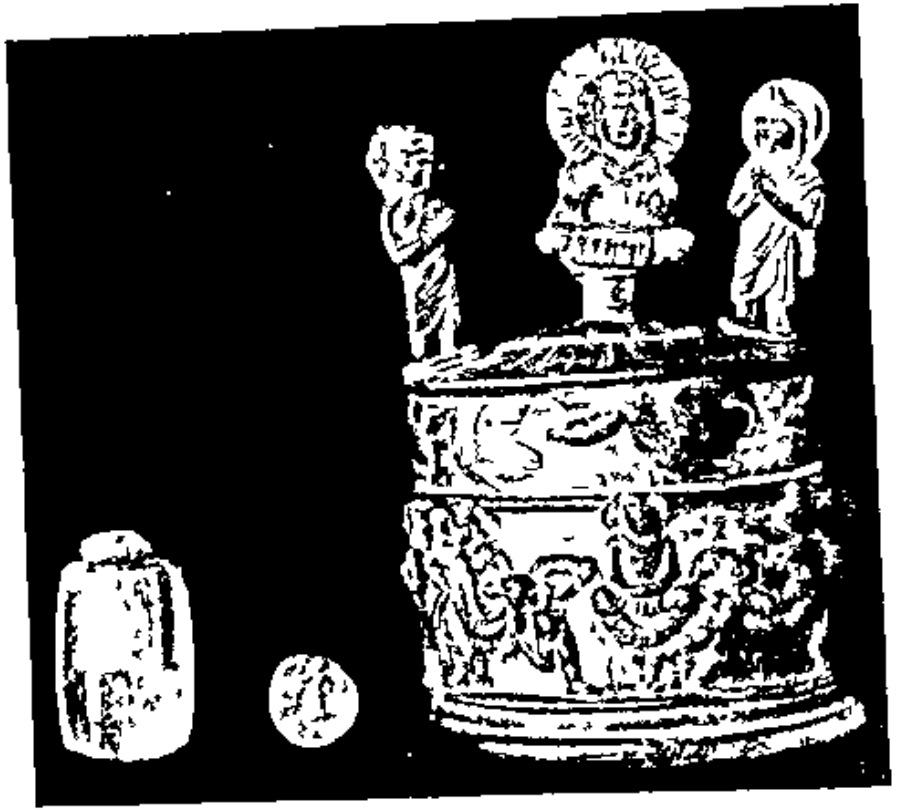
Excavations were recommenced, after a lapse of about forty years, in 1907. For months it looked as if nothing was to be found in the confused heaps of débris. Then in 1908, little by little there emerged from the mound the stone plinth of this gigantic pagoda, which is undoubtedly the largest of its kind known to exist in India,[1] and which in other respects agrees with the description

[1] Marshall.

of Kanishka's memorial recorded by the Chinese pilgrims. Indeed, there could now be no shadow of doubt that this was the identical building. The exact centre was fixed at the intersecting of lines joining the four corners, and a shaft, or well, was sunk into the centre of the basement and carried down with much labour through heavy stone foundation until at last, at a depth of 20 feet below the surface, expectations were realised by the discovery of a small stone relic chamber. It was within twenty feet of the tunnel dug by Lieutenant Cromton in the sixties. A large stone slab covered the chamber. It had subsided a little, breaking off one of the three figures on the lid of the casket below. Otherwise the casket and its contents were intact. If any evidence had been previously wanting to prove that this pagoda was Kanishka's, it was amply supplied now by the objects brought to light. Kanishka's "lion seal," still unbroken, closed the crystal reliquary within the casket. A Kanishka coin lay near it, which in itself would have been sufficient proof of the period of deposit. Thus the authenticity of the relics was established once for all. They were the ones buried by Kanishka, and these Hiuen Tsiang tells us—and his accuracy has been severely tested in all his other statements—were relics of the Gautama Buddha. Sir John Marshall points out that there were several relics deposited at the redistribution by Asoka in *stupas*, which afterward were in Kanishka's territory, so that there would be no difficulty in his procuring a relic to add dignity to his



A Buddha Image from Peshawur from which School of Sculpture



The Buddha Relics.
(Crystal reliquary ; seal ; and casket.)

capital city of Pushkalavati.[1] So link by link the evidence has been drawn from obscure Chinese monastic libraries, and from barren mounds in Northern India. It is a wonderful feat if you come to consider that Buddha died five centuries B.C. The relics now entrusted to Burma are as authentic as those of Ramases the Great, or Seti I. But whereas there have been scores of kings as great as Ramases, there has been, in our *kalpa*, only one Buddha, the "Light of the World."

The relic casket was made of an alloy—chiefly of bronze. Several weeks later, when the encrustation of ages had been chemically removed, an inscription in Karoshti was found punched into the metal in dotted lines. The last shred of doubt was dispelled by the discovery of Kanishka's name. There was also found the name of a Greek who had designed the casket. The casket was like a cylinder. Upon the lid stood a group of three figures. One figure (as already mentioned) had been knocked off, but it lay near by. The central figure was the Buddha. Those to right and left were the *Bodhisattvas* Avalokitesvara and Maitreya. The cylinder was divided into two bands. On the upper one was depicted a flight of geese. Geese have a particular significance in Buddhism. They are engraved

[1] As this book goes to press (in 1916), another of these relics has been recovered from the ruins of ancient Taxilla, near Rawalpindi. The authenticity of the relics is supported by an inscription found along with them. They are to be presented to the Buddhists of Ceylon.

on the Bodhi seat at Gaya, and on certain of Asoka's edict pillars. It was a wounded goose which young Prince Siddhārtha comforted; and we have in Burma a Buddhist province called "Hanthawaddy" after the goose. The fresco of geese on the casket would therefore have been considered appropriate and dignified.

On the lower band was a garland, held up at intervals by Erotes. This device is borrowed from Greek art. One figure upon it represented King Kanishka. On either side of him were the Gods of the Sun and Moon, distinguished respectively by the disc and crescent. These same emblems are found on Kanishka's coins. The casket is now kept in a safe in the Peshawur Museum. On the occasion of its being taken out for inspection by myself and a friend, there was a crash of thunder and vivid lightning.

Inside the relic casket was a small crystal vase, or reliquary, which contained—and still contains—the relics. It is shaped roughly like a barrel, and is six-sided. The cavity within is cloudy, and it is difficult to see the little white bits of bone inside except in one or two clear places. I had the inestimable honour of holding it in my hand one morning in the Arakan Pagoda in Mandalay. It is kept in a safe, locked by night in the inner shrine of the pagoda, which is brightly lit with electricity. By day, when the great gates are open, a sentry is mounted over the safe. The relics are in charge of "*Paya Lugyis*," or Pagoda Trustees, of whom three must be present with their several keys before the

relics can be removed from the safe. The crystal reliquary now lies in a gold casket, shaped like a *stupa*. It was laid on a cushion. An umbrella was held over it, and thus a small procession carried it into the daylight for my inspection. A small crowd of Burmans took the opportunity of doing reverence. Some idea of the stupendous value of the find flashed upon me then, as I held it. In Egypt you can still look into the face of that very Pharaoh before whom Moses stood. But surely no such wonderful find has ever been made after such a lapse of time as this relic of the Gautama Buddha. Here in Mandalay, rests a portion of that very body which beheld the omens of the old man, the sick man, and the dead, which won Enlightenment, and which made the Great Renunciation.

But to return to the find-spot at Peshawur. The proximity of the Gandhāra *Stupa* to the city is one of the reasons why it vanished so mysteriously from the face of the earth. For generations after the decline of Buddhism in the Peshawur vale, the bricks were carried off for building purposes. The slabs of stone protecting the city gates, and the culverts along the Jumrud Road are said (though I don't know on what authority) to belong to the *stupa*.

The *stupa* has now been entirely dug out. Its plinth is roughly 40 yards square. At each corner are circular bastions upon which, no doubt, stood smaller pagodas. There were also numerous little shrines all around the broad courtyard. Their basements

still exist. The floor of the pagoda court is now of course some feet below the surrounding country. Some stucco frescoes remain. Also some grotesque heads with bulging eyes and humorous faces have been found there. Originally they were made of stucco; but they seem to have been accidentally baked in some conflagration, and so are handed down to us in a particularly good state of preservation. The finer bits of statuary have been removed into the Peshawur museum. The *stupa* was without doubt once beautiful. The walls were solid, and built of large, well-made bricks, while here and there blocks of dressed stone were embedded in the masonry. The bricks are about ten inches long, and, as already mentioned, were in great demand for building purposes in the city. Eight walls radiate, like spokes of a wheel, from the centre of the *stupa*. The *tope* is filled with alternate layers of earth and stone, and it seems probable that these radiating walls were intended to prevent the weight of the filling from bursting the outer walls. Earth is fast being washed by rain into the well, or shaft, which was dug into the top of the mound. The "find-spot" of such great value is thus being obliterated, and nothing has been done to preserve it. When I was there last, in 1913, the spot where the Buddha's relics had rested for 2,000 years was desecrated with a litter of empty tins.

Considerable excavations have also been made into the monastery mound. Strong brick walls, rows of pillars, and a long brick drain have been cleared.

Pottery, statuary, seals, heads, and gems have been added to the museum. At least three levels of occupation have been found, buildings having been erected above the remains of still older ones, which themselves had been destroyed, buried, and forgotten. Sites such as this, which have been re-occupied and rebuilt upon, are as a rule less rich in "finds" than sites which have been hurriedly abandoned by reason of fire, or earthquake, and not inhabited again. The accumulation of soil is also very great over the monastery, and it will probably never be dug out.

Constant reference is made to these monasteries by the Chinese pilgrims. It was here that some learned Buddhist books were written. There was a tradition that when the monastery had been destroyed seven times by fire, the Law of the Buddha would depart from the land. Fatal prophecy !! There are frequent thick deposits of ash and charcoal in the soil, showing that there were several big fires. In 629 A.D. Hiuen Tsiang laments the decline of Buddhism in India, and records that the *stupa* was in bad repair. Buddhism was nearing extinction in the land of its birth.

The Shah ji Dheri mound belongs to a Mahommedan who has not been very generously treated. The incomparable treasure dug up on his property was claimed by the Government of India who gave him a hundred rupees, or some such ridiculously small sum, to console himself with. He instituted a law suit. But as the relics were treasure-trove, and he had already signed a

document of surrender before the digging began, he lost his case. The significance of all this is that there is bound to be difficulty later on if the question of a monument at the "find-spot" arises. The necessity for marking the "find-spot" in some suitable way has twice already been pointed out to Government.

The relics having been recovered and authenticated, the question arose as to what was to be done with them. The claim of the Buddhist province of Burma was overwhelming, and they were eventually presented to the Burmese.

The possession of an authentic relic of the Buddha has been for centuries one of the aspirations of Burma. The Burmese may, however, be forgiven if at first they suspected the authenticity of the relic now presented them. It came in an age when a genuine bone was almost past hoping for, and from a part of India least likely to produce it. Fraudulent relics of the Buddha have before now been imported with great solemnity—as for example in about A.D. 1576, when Dharmapala, king of Ceylon, sent a reputed tooth of Buddha as a present to Bureng Naung, king of Pegu. The only *real* tooth, which had been enshrined at Kandy, had been destroyed in 1560 by Don Constantine, the Portuguese Viceroy of India, although the king of Pegu is said to have then offered to ransom it for a sum equivalent to £41,000 sterling.[1]

[1] *Phayre's "History of Burma," p. 117.*

But the Burmese have not been slow to appreciate the weight of evidence in favour of these relics, and their authenticity is now believed in sincerely. A deputation headed by the Pyinmana Mintha, a son of the *late King Mindon of Burma*, was sent over to Calcutta to receive them from the hands of the Viceroy in 1910. The ashes had been placed by the Indian Government in a golden casket, set with jewels and shaped like a Buddhist *stupa*. It was inscribed as follows :—

" The bones enclosed within this casket are believed to be the relics of *Gautama* Buddha deposited by the great Kushan Emperor, Kanishka, in a once magnificent and famous *stupa* near the city of Peshawur. Beneath the ruins of that *stupa* they were found enclosed in the crystal reliquary in which they still repose, and within a casket of bronze bearing the effigy of the Emperor Kanishka. They are entrusted by His Excellency the Earl of Minto, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, to the Buddhists of the Indian Empire to be enshrined by them at the city of Mandalay in Burma. In the tenth year of the reign of His Majesty King Edward VII, Emperor of India."

The relics were conveyed to Burma on the British India Steamer *Lama*, and were exposed to view for five days at the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon, where they were visited by thousands of people. Large crowds attended the procession to the railway station where the relics were placed in a special train for transit

to Mandalay. Halts were made at Pegu, Toungoo, Yamethin, Thazi, and Kyaukse to enable crowds of people to do reverence. How strange this pomp and circumstance after a thousand years of complete neglect!

A temporary home has been found for the relics in the Sanctuary of the Arakan Pagoda at Mandalay, where, as already stated, they are placed in a safe, guarded by a sentry throughout the day, when the pagoda is open. Twenty-four trustees were then appointed to superintend the care of, and future disposal of, the relics. Three members were entrusted with three different keys of the safe, without any one of which it cannot be opened. A subscription list was started to provide funds for a suitable pagoda to be erected on a spur of Mandalay Hill. Buddhist Burma has responded enthusiastically, and a truly magnificent pagoda is now nearing completion. It is called the Dat-daw, or 'Pagoda of the Relics.'

The Arakan Pagoda, in which the Peshawur Buddha relics have now remained for six years, is so called after the celebrated image it contains. This image of the Buddha was cast in Arakan in the reign of King Chanda-Surya, who ascended the throne of Arakan in A.D. 146.* The image became so famous that miraculous powers were attributed to it for ages afterwards. It was finally carried away by the Burmese under Bodaw Paya when he conquered Arakan in A.D. 1784, and the present shrine was built for its reception.

The new Relic Pagoda, or Dat-daw, is built on very much the same plan as the Arakan. There is a square central tower of seven diminishing roofs, rising one above the other. Round this central shrine are broad colonnades. The building is solidly made of brick and stone, with iron girders in the roof. Care has been taken to ensure it an essentially Burmese appearance. The spur of Mandalay Hill upon which it stands has been built round with masonry walls, so as to create a large platform. From the pagoda there is a lovely view over the shrines and moats of Mandalay to Thibaw's Palace and the Arakan Pagoda. Beyond again lie the still older capitals of Amarapura and Ava, and the white pagodas of Sagaing, beyond the Irrawaddy. The walls of the inner shrine are incrusted with coloured glass in the Burmese fashion, and the relics will be protected by fine gates.

There has been a long controversy as to whether the relics should be buried deep down in the masonry, or exposed to view. This latter plan has been finally decided on. I think it is a pity. It would, in my opinion, have been better to protect them as securely as possible from theft, and from the dangers of wars, revolutions, invasions, fires, and other catastrophes, which presumably the future has in store.

It is hoped that when the relics are finally deposited in their new home they will throw lustre upon our Empire, and spread the knowledge of the Buddha's Law through the whole world.

An Appeal.

The relics of the Gautama Buddha having been suitably provided for, there remains one more duty to perform—namely, to mark in a fitting manner the "find-spot" in the Shah ji Dheri mound near Peshawur. Nothing has yet been done to preserve a site of great importance to all Buddhists, all antiquarians, and all geographers. Worse than this. There apparently is no intention of doing anything. The attention of the authorities has already been drawn twice to the pressing need of this work of conservation. Lord Curzon, who was approached, replied sympathetically, and addressed the Government of India. Later Sir John Marshall, the Head of the Archæological Department, was asked if anything could be done. His reply was to the effect that nothing could be done.

To mark the site is obviously the right thing to do. It is difficult to say what is the obstacle in the way—but one may shrewdly guess that the owner of Shah ji Dheri, who was so shabbily treated when the relics were found, is not likely to listen sweetly to reason now. Still, with more liberal treatment, his feelings could no doubt be soothed, and the difficulty is not insurmountable.

In the meanwhile, six years' rain has already washed down much earth over the site, which lies at the bottom of a deep hole. Every storm helps to obliterate the spot, and it will soon be lost for ever.

It is not fair to expect the Burmese to subscribe to this distant object, when the housing of the relics alone has cost them more than a lakh of rupees. Besides, there remains much else to be done to the new pagoda. Neither can the Archæological Department be expected to devote funds to setting up monuments, when they have all too little money for exploration and conservation. In India there are now no Buddhists to carry out this work of merit. It is quite clear that, unless the Government generously assumes the initiative, the site will be lost. It is a small work, but eminently worthy of a great Government. The site is of greater importance than Old Fort William, or the Black Hole, and other interesting places which were saved from obliteration by Lord Curzon. The preservation of a site such as this is not costly. A stone pavement, or a pillar, with a brief inscription is all that is necessary. In this case a handsome monument could easily be made without cost, by using some of the giant Buddhas (fourteen feet high), now lying on their backs disregarded in the Peshawur museum. They belong to that same age as Kanishka's pagoda, and are in every way appropriate.

The site is particularly worth saving. It is closely connected with the great Kushan Emperor, Kanishka. It is the site of what was once India's greatest monument. It is associated with Hiuen Tsiang, Fa Hian, and Sung Yun, towards whom the modern geographer feels a warm sympathy even across this lapse of time. What

have they not done for us, those simple, brave Chinese explorers? They have restored to the world, at this late age, relics which, but for them, would never have reappeared out of the dust.

Lastly, Shah ji Dheri has been the resting place for 2,000 years of the ashes of the Buddha. It is therefore holy ground, and sacred to thousands of British subjects, who cannot fail to note its neglect with distress. Whatever our creed, if we know what *Truth* is, we recognise that the Lord Buddha preached, in one form, that Truth. Asoka, that great preserver of sacred sites, exhorts us to "respect the traditions of all people, which are worthy of reverence for one reason or another."[1]

In a little span of time, what has been done in our age will have lapsed into dim history, and be subject to all the doubts and speculations of other generations. It is then clearly our duty to mark the site where the Buddha relic was found. Otherwise it will be lost to posterity. Here is a great opportunity to "earn merit."

[1] Rock Edict XII. (Shahbazghari inscription, near Mardan, N. W. Frontier Prov.)

CHAPTER XIX.

KYAUKSE.

FROM the windows of a mail train I have often looked up with curiosity to the crowd of pagodas covering a rocky hill near the railway station at Kyaukse. At last fate took me there, and Kyaukse proved to be a place of no ordinary interest. Yet so backward is Burma in these respects that there is not yet even a full description of it in the *Gazetteer* to enlighten an enquirer. Luckily the traditions of the people seem fairly reliable. With the help of a few inscriptions, they have learned, like all Buddhists, to pass on history by word of mouth. A pagoda is the key to most mysteries in Burma, and so it is in this case too. The key to the history of Kyaukse is the small golden shrine, which stands on the very top of the rocky hill.

The site is of considerable antiquity. It was first built upon by Anawratta, one of the greatest kings that Burma ever had. He reigned at Pugan from 1044 to 1077 A.D. The pagoda he built at Kyaukse is therefore eleventh century, and we may suppose that he did not erect it until after the growth of his Empire in 1057.[1] As a matter of fact, the town people

[1] In this year he sacked Prome and Thaton. See my "Pugan," p. 9 (Hanthawaddy Press, Rangoon).

say that the first pagoda was founded in B.E. 700, corresponding with 1338 A.D. This, however, is obviously incorrect; and as an inscription confirms the fact that Anawratta was the founder, it is safe to put it down as eleventh century. That first pagoda was called the Shwe-Tha-Laung-paya. It was entirely destroyed by an earthquake in the Burmese year 952 (A.D.-1590).

The present pagoda was built on the same site by Min-ye-kyaw-zwa Shin-ba-yin, a king of Ava, immediately after the earthquake. The new pagoda was called the Sula Muni, but the old name of the original shrine is also sometimes used. Beside the pagoda, the king of Ava set up an inscription on a marble slab. It stands there still, preserved in a small stone shed. An extract from the inscription reads as follows :—

Dated Buddhist Era 2134.

Burmese Era 952 (*i.e.*, A.D. 1590).

"HONOUR BE TO THEE, OH OMNISCIENCE!"

"May the sublime religion of the Omniscience, that is capable of dispelling the darkness of folly that environs all mankind, remain exalted as long as the world exists.

"There reigned in Jumbudvipa a king named Min-ye-kyaw-zwa, replete with glory and power like the sun, and who was most needed. May this *stupa* exist for a long time. It was in the year 2134 of the Buddhist Era, and 952 of the Burmese Era.

"Min-ye-kyaw-zwa, descendant of kings of the Solar Race, the Master of Red Elephants, and Master of Masters of White Elephants, the owner of numerous mines of precious minerals such as gems, gold, silver, amber, etc., and the possessor of golden palaces and *Pyathats*, was the grandson of that wise and righteous king known as Gari-tari-bawana-de-taya-pawara-pandita Maha-Dhamma-Raja-dipati.[1]

"King Min-ye-kyaw-zwa (who may be compared to the sun) after defeating his enemies by his might and power, just as the sun defeats the pitch darkness, laid the foundations of the Sigon Pagoda, the likeness of the Sula Muni (Pagoda) on the summit of Tha-lyaung Hill, that may be compared to Mount Meru, at eleven of the Burmese clock after sunrise, when the Anuradha Star was at the Zenith, on Wednesday, the 8th waxing of the *Taw-thalin*, the month of the migration of leopards, in the rainy season of 952 (Burmese Era) or 2134 of the year of the Buddha, the Lord of the three rational beings (*i.e.*, Men, *Nats*, and Bhramas) who, after fulfilling the thirty *paramitas* in respect of charity, for the whole period of four *athin-cheyas* and one hundred thousand worlds, having acquired the most perfect knowledge through his omniscient wisdom, and having proved himself victorious over the five temptations, and all other enemies, on the celestial throne under the Bodhi Tree, had emancipated and conducted to Heaven,

[1] This is King Sin-byu-shin (923-955 B.E.), Capital at Hanthawaddy.

the place of eternal happiness, twenty-four *athincheyas*, sixty *kutais*, and one hundred thousand men, as all the Buddhas do.

"The articles enshrined in the pagoda were 126 pure silver images, weighing 1,300 *viss*[1] in all; four pure silver umbrellas, weighing 200 *viss*; a casket with four compartments, one containing one sacred tooth, two containing each one silver image, and another containing one gold image; eighty images of Buddha's disciples, etc., etc.

"May this, my pagoda, be the object of devotion of men, *Nats*, and Bhramas for the whole 5,000 years of the Buddhist era. I share the merit obtained from this with all the beings in the sky up to the *Thagya*,[2] and with those beneath, down to the *Aviji* Hell. May they share the merit in equal proportion with me. The inscription is complete to the effect that it is the meritorious deed of the king of Ava."

* * * * * *

From the pagoda's platform on the hill top, you look down from wooden balconies which pious people have built. The view over the submerged paddy fields, stretching away like a lake to the distant hills, is very beautiful, particularly in the quiet evening light. It must have inspired kings and hermits for centuries.

[1] A *viss* is roughly 3½ lbs.

[2] The *Thagya Min* is a heavenly king reigning in Tushita, who takes great interest in the affairs of men.

It has inspired the people of Kyaukse too, for they have lavished their wealth upon the rocky hill, covering its spurs with quaint pagodas and images, and building stone steps all the way up to the top. It is hard to believe that the curse of distant war has fallen even upon those spreading paddy fields, and that the young green rice, thrown like a gauze over the watery surface, is doomed to be a profitless crop. But such thoughts can hardly invade the security of this beautiful pagoda. The evil which now involves the whole world is at least shut out from here by the accumulated merit of centuries, for the people of Kyaukse have reserved the whole hill exclusively for the building of pagodas and monasteries.

The altars of the Sula Muni are magnificently decorated with coloured glass and gold-leaf. There are many figures of *Nats* in the outer court; and from the eyrie balconies can be seen the paddy fields which, together with 30 slaves, the Ava king presented to the pagoda "for the purpose of repairing the enclosing rampart, the *Zayat*, or the *Taxaung*, for or the purpose of effecting any improvement to the pagoda, whenever occasion arises during the infinite number of years to come."

There remain still a few relics of the first pagoda of Shwe-Tha-Laung, which was destroyed by the earthquake. Many of the original lacquer images are piled up together in a dark cell, where broken, headless ones, and a few that are almost undamaged, have survived the general destruction. They are said to have

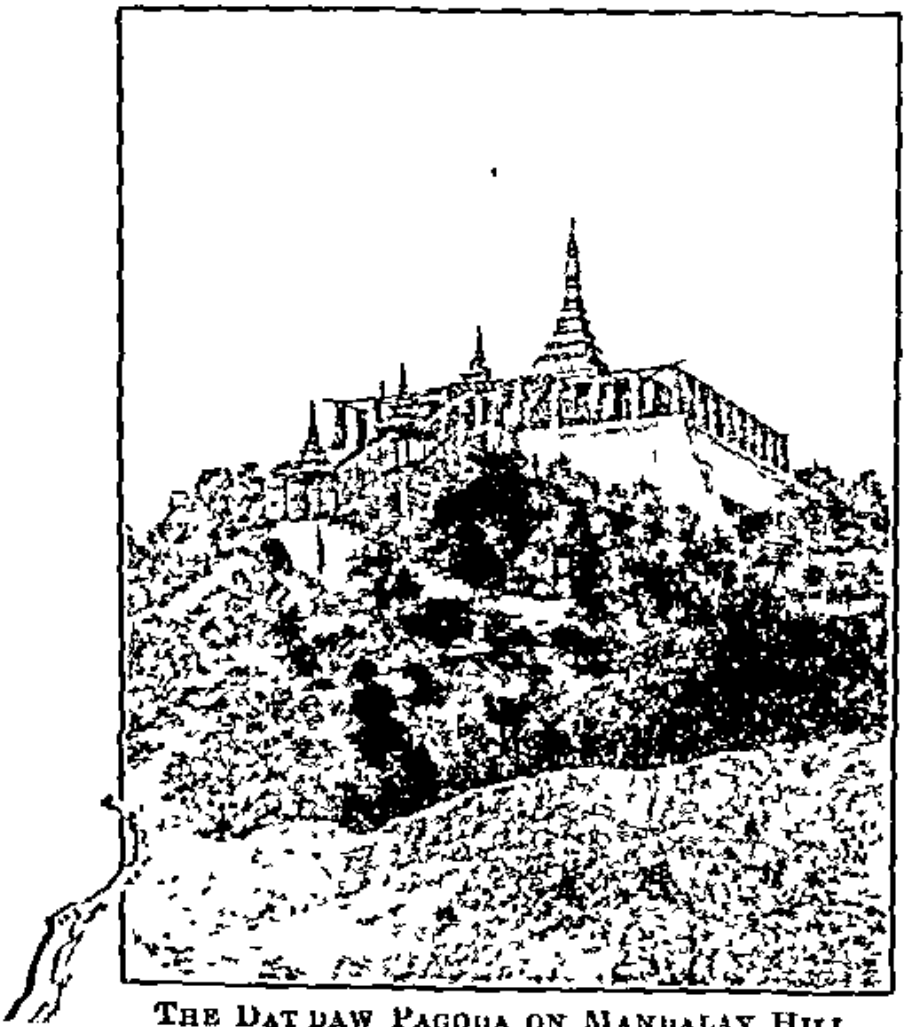
been presented to Anawratta's shrine by a younger brother of his equally famous successor, Kyanzittha. In that case, these neglected images are 800 years old. Their proper place should be a museum. One of the *Paya Lugyis* (Pagoda Trustees), who was with me, gave me one. But on the following morning his colleagues disagreed with the gift. I immediately returned it. But later in the day it was sent back to me. The trustees said that the image had been badly neglected in a dark cell. Upon the strict condition of its being treated reverently and placed upon a high seat, they would be glad to present it to me.

There are, on the pagoda's platform, wooden images of a Shan wife of Anawratta, and of her brother Prince Ko Thein A-shin, who was a chief of Myogyi. Both these people were real figures in history. The prince was ordered to go and pay homage to Anawratta. Fearing that a refusal would bring misery upon his people, and being determined not to acknowledge Anawratta's authority, he drowned himself in a whirlpool.

His sister was Anawratta's wife. She also came to a sad end. The legends say that it became necessary to offer some sacrifice at the weir of the canal, which Anawratta had made at Kyaukse. The queen, being unwilling to survive her brother, killed herself as a sacrifice. Her image exists still in a little shrine down by the weir. The name Kyaukse means 'Stone weir.' The canals in this part of the country are the subject of many legends.



THE NAGA-YON PAGODA. AT KYAUKSE.



THE DAT DAW PAGODA ON MANDALAY HILL,

These few rough images have a special interest. They are probably the oldest pieces of wooden portrait statuary in Burma. They are perhaps 50 years older than the statues of Shin Arahan and Kyanzittha in the Ananda Pagoda of Pugan, which are believed to be the only two existing examples of *stone* portrait statuary in the country.[1] The wooden image of Alaungsithu's Shan queen, near the Civil Hospital at Meiktila, is equally interesting.

I have spoken here only of the Sula Muni, which crowns the top of the Kyaukse Hill, but there are scores of other shrines too, crowded upon its spurs, balancing on projecting rocks, and nestling amongst the shaded tamarind trees at the foot of the hill. Here the centuries meet. The tin decorations which men put up now mingle with the exquisite wood-carving of their ancestors. A covered causeway ascends the hill, crowded round with pagodas, of which some, called *Naga-yon* (the Coiled Serpent), are made to represent great dragons. In quiet corners there are marble footprints of the Buddha, and in the Shih-seh-Shih Su (The Eighty-eight Pagodas), that number of hermit-images rest in their antique little shrine. And from the Paya Leh Su (The Pagoda of four Buddhas) the gentle faces of colossal images gaze calmly down over the shrines.

[1] See my "Pagan," p. 12 (Hanthawaddy Press, Rangoon).

CHAPTER XX.

BURMESE ENCHANTMENT.

Visions of Burma remain for a token
Dear to the heart: a possession of worth.
This an enchantment that need not be broken,
Need not return from its dream to the earth.

Ours (for a memory) sweet heavy odours,
Ours *(for remembrance) echoing gongs,*
Whisper of wind o'er the bells of pagodas
Heard in the dusk, with the home-comer's song.

Ours the domain where the free mind may wander
Pausing to capture a fugitive thought—
THOUGHT that was born of the clouds over yonder,
Substance of which an enchantment is wrought.

THE messy document which lies before me on the table is a Burmese petition. For inscrutable reasons, my knowledge of Burmese will be judged in an examination by my capacity to flounder through legal terms. They are Greek to me in my own language, let alone Burmese. As soon as I have passed, I shall forget all about the "*Particulars of the suit, Indian Penal Code, sections so and so, under, case is filed, and please punish him, Sir.*" .

This document is written hurriedly by a pleader. It is a whirl of horrid little circles, shorn of all those graceful, sweeping lines which, at other times, the Burmese love to cultivate.

With unusual luck I have solved *Pey-paw-wa-ree*, *Da-tha-ma*, and *In-sa-peit-daw*, and connected them with the English words *February*, *Decimal*, and *Inspector*. It is a criminal case. I have translated the heading easily enough, because it is always in the same set form. But I have stuck as usual where business really begins, soon after the words "*the matter is as follows.*" I perceive dimly that someone has trespassed, or cut off water, and used it in his own paddy fields; but it is all very mixed. Whether the complainant did it, or the defendant, Heaven only knows, and it really doesn't matter, for I have noticed something arresting in the list of defendants' names, something which has caught my fancy, and carried me very far away from the sordid sections of the Penal Code. The first defendant is called Maung Poo Sein Byu '*Mr. Fire-Fly.*' His rank and title is Nga Chyat Sa '*Fifteen rupee-eater*'—a modest allusion to the monthly salary of the said *Fire-fly*.

Next come Maung Nyo and Maung Ga-ley—'*Brother Dark*' and '*Brother Small*': and after them Maung Kan Byee '*Mr. Full-of-Luck.*' Undoubtedly *Mr. Full-of-Luck* was welcome when he came to enliven the lonely hours of his parents. Perhaps the world seemed happier to his mother after '*Full-of-Luck*' arrived. And he was bigger, I suppose, than '*Mr. Little*,' and more handsome than the poor ugly little girl next door, Hla Oan Mey—'*Sister-who-perhaps-will-get-beautiful.*' Somehow I feel interested

in "*Sister-who-perhaps-will-get-beautiful.*" I wonder if she did? I am sure she must have, for I have seen very few really ugly Burmese women. Next on the list are Maung Chit Aung and Maung Chit Paing, respectively little brothers '*Lovable*' and '*Possessor of Love.*' What homely pictures these names suggest, what touching proofs of affection. How vividly they express the happy childhood of a people who never grow up. The homes are full of children. But many die too, and leave sad, desolate hearts behind them. And I am reminded of this also by the last name upon my list. Surely his mother must have almost despaired over some childish illness, and overjoyed at his recovery, called him Maung Po Hnyar—'*Little-brother-who-was-spared.*'

I never guessed that such charm enlivened the dullness of any legal document.

And herein lies the secret of Burma's enchantment. There are strange and attractive things hidden everywhere, even in the most unlikely places. There are mysteries waiting solution in everything, from the names of simple village folk to the misty depths of their religion, tradition, and literature. Everywhere we are upon the edge of the unknown.

And so it is with the people themselves too. We have much to learn about them. Much also to learn *from* them. If the Burmese have many faults, they are nearly all forgivable ones, and they are balanced by many good and amiable characteristics. Their weaknesses

are those which rise naturally from so idealistic a philosophy as Buddhism, which views life in a light which we, with our widely different training, cannot easily appreciate. The laws of *Karma*, Impermanence, and Transiency are misty visions to us. But they are real, living truths to the Burmese. They repeat them daily in the pagodas. They are no mere empty words, but realities which have moulded the Burmese character, just as surely as our own philosophies have moulded ours. The Burmese have learnt through Buddhism the folly of possessions. Nature has placed them in a country where they can live comfortably—even luxuriously—without any. And though we may pretend to despise men with so little worldly ambition—at least we envy them their freedom. The natural result of the idea of Impermanence is a desire to spend money immediately and lavishly, and every Burman without exception does so. He does not spend much on himself, but *acquires merit* by making extravagant gifts and building superfluous pagodas; and with characteristic recklessness, shares the merit of his charity with "all the three worlds of Bhramas, Men, and *Nats*." The charity is misplaced perhaps, but we must not overlook that underlying motive of charity. The Burmese are essentially a people who think that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

And let us not judge these things as harshly as some people do. We are strangers who stand only upon the very brink of a new and wonderful world.

The traditions of nations arise from springs deep down in their past. Behind the most trifling sentiment, beneath a quaintly expressed comment, there may be, and often is, an age of accumulated, inherited experience. We do not understand the sentiment, because our own tradition is of a very different kind. Our views on *most points seem queer to the Burmese, just as theirs* do to us. Each is the product of the long-ago past of our respective histories.

Brought up ourselves to other beliefs, inheriting very different ideals, we cannot easily comprehend the true inwardness of all that springs from Buddhist philosophy. All this gaiety, happiness, and freedom, this contentment to live from hand to mouth, to live and let live, to spend lavishly on thoughtless charity, does not seem to be what it really is, the natural fruit of the law of Universal Sorrow. To us it seems all contradictory. The God-like Buddha himself was not a God, but only a man. Yet he ranks higher than all the Gods! And Destiny, which by *Karma* leads inexorably to its pre-destined end, is yet all the time under our own control! It is only slow research which shows that these things are not really contradictions at all. And as we proceed we learn that our own standards are not, after all, the only lofty ones in this world of men.

It is necessary to observe the facts of Nature about us. To note how everything around us is changing. The mountainous white clouds evaporate. The

Irrawaddy passes on towards the sea. The great silent pagodas decay slowly throughout the land. Burma is changing. So are its people. It is all inevitable. It is the Law. We know that men die and fall to dust, that solid continents like Atlanta leave only a misty legend behind them. We know that civilisations climb up out of barbarism very slowly, only to plunge back into barbarism again, leaving nothing behind but a litter of pottery. Perhaps even now we may be watching a like catastrophe. Gods and men, mountains and monuments are all subject to the law of Impermanence.

This is a fact that Buddhists never forget. They do not remember it only in rare, reflective moments. It is a fact always before them. They repeat it over and over again every day—"all things are subject to Sorrow and Impermanence." Buddhism itself is subject to the same law, and the period of its existence is said to be only five thousand years. Only the Law itself, which existed before Buddha revealed it, is immortal. It does not matter now whether the "first cause" was good or evil. The Buddha himself taught that search into the past is futile. It is only the future that matters now. We pass into it free, except for the fetters of our own deeds.

The whole atmosphere of Burma is steeped in this idea of Impermanence. Even the pagodas are eloquent of it in their decay. How tarnished and ruined they are, and the men who built them are dead and forgotten. How

useless it is to strive after the things of the world, and yet how blind we are to see it. Even the small village boys riding out like Lao Tsen (the Chinese philosopher of Taoism) to graze their buffaloes seem wiser than ourselves. In their simplicity they possess a peace of mind unknown to us. We are bound mind and body by civilisation, loaded with chains in the prison of convention.

Consider these naked little lords of the buffalo, all you who are wise, and possess the things you have sought. Consider the richness of their poverty. They toil not, neither do they spin. Yet in all our glory, we are not happy as one of these. Perfectly secure in their own poor homes, they grow up contented with their small, simple world. They are shielded from many of the sorrows that we know. And when they grow old, the same home-roof shelters them, until the native clay which they have ploughed, receives them back into her breast again.

Where is freedom? Omar Khayyam sought it upon the Throne of Saturn, and from the Rolling Heavens. But Heaven only replied "A blind Understanding." And the Buddha sought it also. He found it. But not in Heaven. After years of search he suddenly discovered it very near at hand—*within his own heart.*

Upon this revelation the life of Burma is based. Each man's freedom is within himself. Men are only fettered by their own lusts and possessions. Men escape only by their own deeds. When the Buddha discovered this stupendously simple fact, the whole

world trembled with the thrill of enlightenment. Sweet scents and whispers filled the night, and the dawn broke with unusual beauty. Something of all that emancipation invades the atmosphere of this Buddhist Burma. Its people toil and suffer just as we all do—and yet they are more free and happy. They have entered upon the Path.

PAGE.

Buddhists 29
Burma 19
Climate of 104, 190
Lower Burma .. 20
Burmese (the People) 12 to 26, 99
Character of 16, 17, 20, 302, 303
Derivations .. 100
Race .. 19, 20
Servants .. 14
Soldiers .. 23
Women 18, 204
Burying alive .. 218
Butterflies 92, 159, 165
Butterfly spirits .. 165

C

Candles 209
Canton 202
Capitals (change of) 222, 242
Caterpillars 120 to 122
Cause and Effect (see Karma).
Chaik Htee Yo .. 53
Chameleon .. 143, 144
Charity .. 13, 30, 63, 78
Charsadda 273
Chau Erh Feng .. 192
Chau Sheh Chwen 141, 142, 177
Chauk-daw-gyi .. 249
Cheating Death .. 209
Cheroots .. 91
Child mortality .. 94
Chins 93
Chin Hills Expedition .. 93
Chindwin 83, 99

PAGE.

Chinese—
Aggression .. 128
Armies .. 51
Chickens .. 177
Cookery .. 213
Dogs .. 135
Eggs .. 177
Invasions .. 20
Military posts .. 192
Muleteers .. 130
Saddles .. 13
Soldiers 199, 20
Traders 167, 17
Transport 132 to 137, 13 to 14
Ching Kam Gam .. 17
Ching-paw 13
Chunthay .. 12, 58, 6
Chipwi Hka 146, 147, 17
Chu-yea-haw .. 20
Chung-Dzur Fung 161, 162, 20
Cingalese Influence 55, 2
City of the Dead .. 2
Clubs
Coffin-wood 192, 197, 200, 20 2
Creepers
Crows 1
Cruickshank (Capt.) .. 1
Cuckoo 1
Cuffe (Lady) .. 1

D

Dacoity .. 24, 25,
Dancing .. 7, 168,
Dat-daw Pagoda 61, 215,
Dead (The) ..
Death-rate ..

	Page.
Deserters ..	176, 199
Dhamma (Law)	.. 57, 63
Dhara	17, 170
Dhukka (Sorrow)	.. 63, 87
Dipankara ..	.. 238
Diseases (kinds of)	119, 212
Divide (Irrawaddy-Salween) ..	.. 191
Dove ..	.. 161
Drops of Water	28, 34, 40
Drillers ..	.. 79
Dust-offering	.. 238

E

Emden ..	.. 184
Epigraphy ..	.. 246
Equanimity	.. 63
Eye-gift ..	.. 273

F

Fa-Hian ..	275, 278, 291
Feng-Shui-Ling Pass	192, 194, 200 to 202
Festivals ..	.. 10, 89
Fire ..	123, 124
Fire-flies ..	.. 66
Fish ..	100, 132, 190
Fishermen ..	.. 98
Fleas ..	.. 197
Flower-offerings	209, 212
Fluff-insects	.. 160
Forest-fires	.. 166
Fossils ..	.. 2
Foucher ..	.. 278
Four Golden Caves	.. 243
Fra Angelico	.. 64
Friendship ..	34, 35, 37
Frontier (N.-E.)	128, 132, 174, 191

G

Ganda-ku-tee Taik ..	230
Gandhāra ..	57, 58, 268, 273
Gangaw ..	60, 90, 92, 94
Gawda-palin	.. 52, 87
Geese ..	.. 281
Ghosts ..	165, 168
Gibbon ..	157, 162
Goteik ..	.. 217
Gouger ..	241, 251
Gramophone	154, 172
Grave-yards	144, 168
Grazing ..	.. 174
Greco-Buddhist Art	57, 238, 271, 272

H

Hamadryads	112 to 117
Hanthawaddy	.. 282
Hare (in moon)	.. 152
Harīti ..	.. 274
Harp-player	.. 214
Hashtnagar	.. 278
Hassan Gul	141, 175
Hatred ..	.. 165
Haunting ..	.. 165
Hell ..	63 to 65
Hiuen Tsiang	274, 276 to 278, 291
Hkampti Long (*see* Putao)	
Hookus ..	.. 161
Hornets ..	120 to 122
Horse-flies ..	.. 158
Houses ..	.. 2
Hparo ..	178, 179, 192
Hpaw-law-lang Bum ..	189

PAGE.

Hpimaw 148, 189 to 199, 202, 203
Expedition to .. 148
History of .. 192
Htawgaw 141, 149 to 154, 163 202
Htee-hline Paya .. 237
Husking paddy .. 167

I

Images (Buddhist)—
Derivation of 271, 272
Groups of .. 216
Lacquer images 235, 298
Manufacture of .. 216
Portraits in wood 298, 299
Portraits in stone .. 299
Stolen image 94 to 96
I-maw Bum 151, 203
Impermanence 209, 248
Individuality .. 29, 73
Inscriptions 230, 246, 294
Insect life .. 153 to 160
Iris 179
Irrawaddy 104
Head waters of .. 130
Irrawaddy-Salween Divide .. 128, 191, 192

J

Jatakas .. 35, 246
Jewels (The Three) .. 62
Jin Jaw 193
Judson .. 240, 251, 254, 260
Jungles .. 91, 97, 142

K

Kachins 129, 130, 143, 144, 145, 178, 198, 193
Kalemyo 100
Kalewa .. 100, 101
Kanishka 269, 270, 272, 274 to 277, 280
Kapilavastu .. 271
Karma 29, 30, 36, 72, 302, 309
Kaung-hmu-daw 52, 230, 234
Ka-ye-paya .. 61, 62
Kay-tha-ya-za .. 58
Keng Tung .. 192
Kootar-ka 160
Ko Thein a-shin (Prince) 298
Ko-yin 11
Kublai Khan .. 51
Ku-gho 161
Kung Fung 197, 200
Kutan Ho .. 192 to 194, 199
Kuvera 274
Kwannon (Boddhisat) 72, 176, 194
Kwung-Ku-Lu .. 161
Kyanzittha 87, 106, 237, 298, 299
Kyaukse 293

L

Lagwi .. 179, 192
Languages .. 150, 195
Larks 191
Lashis .. 195, 196
Lauhkaung 148, 157, 164
Lau Lu 190
Lawka-tha-ya-pu Pagoda 240
Ledi Saya-daw 206, 208
Leeches 146
Lent (Buddhist) .. 10
Let-ma-yoon Prison 240, 251, 252 to 259
Letters (Mails) 162, 163

	Page.
Letters (Burmese)	210, 211
Lightning	153
Limbin Maung Gale	92
Ling ..	135, 154
Loimwe ..	192, 200, 218
Lo-ta-ka Hunter ..	229
Love (*kinds of*) ..	212
Lubyets ..	110, 214
Lu-chang	192
Lu-zo ..	41 to 49

M

Mad Phoongyi ..	89
Magwe ..	1, 2, 100
Maha Muni	205, 227, 288
Maha Nanda ..	225
Maha Parinirvana ..	272
Mahseer	132
Mails ..	162, 185
Maitreya Buddha	57, 72, 101, 274, 281
Makara	58
Malet (Captain)	154, 190, 200, 202
Mali Hka ..	128, 130
Manau (*see* Dance)	
Mandalay	61, 215, 216, 242, 244, 289
Mantis	121
Mantras	118
Manuha	106
Ma Pwa	12
Marus	130, 145, 164, 165, 168, 169
Maru Village	167 to 168
Ma Shwe Chyok ..	87
Mi-thone-da-ya ..	237
Maung Dwe	236, 238
Maung Khin ..	212
Maung Mya	14, 87, 142
Maung Pein ..	89
Maung Po Myit	12, 142, 210
Maung San Baw ..	190
Maymyo ..	216, 217
Maw River ..	92
Meat-eating	76, 77
Meditation	156
Mee-paya (Nat) ..	219
Meiktila ..	218, 220, 299
Mengun Bell ..	51
Mengun Pagoda	50, 51, 205, 227, 248
Mekong ..	191, 192
Merit ..	29, 100
Military Police	126, 127, 182
Minbu	8
Min Byu Shin (Nat) ..	219
Mindon Min (King)	90, 92, 222, 225, 227
Mingala Zedi	51, 54, 61, 243
Mir Zirat Dheri	273, 278
Monks (*see* Phoongyi)	
Monotony ..	156, 162, 183
Moon (legend of) ..	152
Mosquitoes	146, 158
Moule (Major)	125, 182
Mt. Meru ..	56, 57, 210
Mt. Popbar	104
Mud Volcanoes ..	8
Mu Kaun	171
Mullaley (Captain) ..	182
Mya Zalon Pagoda	1, 10, 26, 52
Myitkyina ..	123, 126
Myitkyina Mail	125, 245
Myittha River	92, 97, 100

PAGE.

N

N'la-dap .. 145, 168
N'Mai Hka 129, 130, 146
N'Sop Zup .. 129 to 132
Nag Cult .. 168, 226
Names (Burmese) 301, 302
Nats 104, 143, 144, 146, 166, 216, 219
Nat Bites 144, 146, 171
Nat Groves .. 145
Nauk-ka-yea-zet .. 30
Naung-daw-gyi (King) 222, 226
Nepaulese Influence .. 228
Nga-dat-gyi (Sagaing) .. 230
Ngaw-chaung River 151, 189, 190
Nightjars 161, 162, 152, 155, 157, 203
Nirvana 30, 35, 68, 71, 73 to 76
Nyaung Ram Min (King) 242
Nyaung U. 87, 107

O

Oak Kyaung (Ava) 235, 236
Officials 14
Oil-fields 79
Oo-ah-re-yawan-tha .. 228
Orchids .. 148, 160
Orissan Influence .. 228
Outpost Life 150, 155 to 157, 161 to 163

P

Pacham Woon 261, 262
Padaing Pin (tree) .. 119
Paddy .. 102, 177
Pagan 52, 54, 60, 61, 87, 88, 114
Battle of .. 264

PAGE.

Pagodas—
Bells of 56, 55, 247
Building of 51, 56, 61
Decay of .. 66
Derivation of 53, 228
Lions of .. 58, 59
Meaning of .. 59
Parts of .. 56
Restoration of 56, 244
Sentiment of 19, 236
Steps of .. 58
Pakokku .. 88, 100, 103
Pakokku Destruction of 123, 124
Pala Village .. 163
Palace (Mandalay) 89, 215
Panwa Pass 171, 173 to 176, 192
Panya Zedi (Sagaing) 228, 229
Paper (reverence of) .. 209
Passes (frontier) 174, 179
Pato-daw-gyi 54, 246
Pauk 88, 89
Paya 59
Paya Nee 247
Peepul Tree .. 9
Perfections (The Ten) .. 63
Peshawur .. 57, 267 to 273
Petitions (Burmese) .. 300
Pheasants 198
Phoongyis 17, 23, 99, 205, 206 to 208, 229
Pigs 132
Pigmies 145
Pines .. 153, 174, 191
Plantains 159
Po-lu-sha-Pu-lo 268, 279
Pondaung Hills 91, 100
Ponies (Burmese) .. 5,
Porcupines .. 14

	Page.
Po Sein ..	105, 108 to 110
Prayer ..	.. 76
Presents ..	.. 12
Primulas ..	174, 197
Procession ..	.. 95
Prome ..	.. 233
Proverb ..	.. 23
Pushkalavati	270, 273
Putao ..	128, 138, 191
Pwe ..	11, 105 to 111
Pyepat ..	.. 148
Python ..	.. 231

Q

Questions of Milinda ..	74, 75

R

Racing ..	.. 5, 7
Rains ..	3, 8, 146, 162, 190
Rangoon ..	.. 55, 56
Rapids ..	100, 130
Raspberries	.. 148
Raw-chu ..	.. 170
Re-incarnation	29, 31 to 34, 36, 39, 68, 93, 147
Relics of Buddha	58, 61, 272
Peshawar Relics	58, 61, 205
Casket of	281, 282
Deposit of	275, 280
Description of	.. 282
Distribution of	.. 280
Find spot of	283, 284
Legend of	274, 275
Monument at find spot	290 to 292
Recovery of	280, 281
Value of	281, 283
Relic Chamber ..	55
Relics fraudulent ..	286
Renunciation ..	216
Rest-House ..	245
Revolution ..	89
Rhododendrons	148, 174, 197
Riding	9
Rikjaw	171
Roads	2
Russel's Viper	117, 118

S

Sagaing ..	20, 228
Legends of	.. 233
Sagu ..	.. 233
Salé ..	.. 86
Salim ..	.. 154
Salin ..	.. 233
Salt ..	.. 177
Salween ..	191, 192
Sangha (Priesthood)	.. 57, 63
Sapada Pagoda	.. 55
Saulu ..	.. 106
Schools (Monastic)	.. 17
Seniku ..	142, 143
Senior (Mrs.)	.. 216
Shah-i-Napursan	.. 278
Shah-ji-Dheri	270, 278, 279, 285, 292
Shan States, South	192, 200
Shanzu ..	.. 242
Shin Arahan	.. 299
Shing Rip ..	.. 147
Shin-thee-wa-lee (Saint)	225
Shinto (compared)	.. 165
Shooting ..	.. 90
Shwebo ..	19, 221 to 225
Shwe-chyet-chya	.. 232

	Page.
Shwe-chyet-yet	232
Shwe Dagon	54, 55
Shwe Mokdaw	101
Shwe Pe-wey	82, 102, 103
Shwe-Tha-Laung	294 to 298
Shwe-Thein-daw	225
Shwe-zai	103
Shwezigon	54, 61, 88, 106
Sin-byu Shin (King)	222, 227 231
Sinloong (Triangle)	130, 131
Slaves	137, 170, 171
Snake-Charmers	114, 116
Snow	173
Snow Pheasant	203
Solitude	161, 163, 183
Songs	96, 102, 167
Sorrow, Cause of	69, 71
Ceasing of	71, 229
Truth of	63, 68, 69 to 71, 304
Sounds of Forest	204
„ of River	204
„ of Village	167
Spiders	158, 160
Spooner (Dr.)	279
Spring	159
Sprinkling of water	28, 29, 39
Ssu-chuan	191
State Prison (Ava)	240, 251, 252 to 259
Stone Paved Camp	172
Stupa	52, 53, 59
Sula Muni	297
Sula-tha-ma-wa	233
Sung Yun	278, 291
Supayalat	236
Superstitions	209, 262
Surra	137, 143, 150
Surveyors	191, 193
Sword (my)	188
Sympathy	38

T

	Page.
Ta Chai	194
Ta Chu Pa	201
Takht-i-Bhai	273, 274
Talaing (Pagodas)	228
Tali Fu	194
Tamarind	2, 246
Tambu Gam	169, 170, 195
Tammu Valley	171
Taping (Steamer)	86, 204
Taw Sein Ko	165, 213, 214
Taxila	58, 281 (note)
Teak	92
Telepathy	37 to 39
Tengueh	141
Tet-deh	119
Thabyeh leaves	212
Thada Oo	241
Thado Dhamma Raja	52, 230
Thadu	13, 28, 31, 39, 225
Thagya Min	78, 152
Tharrawaddy Min	222, 227, 248
That-byin-nyu Pagoda	52, 87
Thatching time	167, 171
Thathana Baing	208
Thayetmyo	19
Thee-ha-ba-hu	58, 59
Thibaw	89, 227
Thugyee	94, 98
Tiddim (Steamer)	82, 84, 101
Tigers	143, 178
Time (of day)	97
Toddy-palm	9
Tooth of Buddha	286

	Page.
Torture ..	255, 266
Tragapan ..	.. 203
Tree-ferns ..	.. 159
Triangle (The)	.. 130
Tsau Nong ..	.. 131
Tucktoo ..	.. 4, 125
Tumsa (priest)	.. 169
Tushita Heaven	.. 57
U	
U Bein Thada	.. 249
U Kan Tee	208, 215
V	
Valley of Death	148, 149
Villages ..	.. 94
Vows ..	.. 63
W	
War .. 155, 180, 186, 187	
Wausaung ..	.. 142
Wazir Bagh	.. 268
Week (A) ..	.. 7
Wethandaya	232, 238
Whirlpools ..	82, 83, 103
Wine ..	169, 178
Winter ..	104, 190
Winza ..	.. 31, 32
Y	
Yangtze-Kiang	.. 191
Yauk-Pa Kwe-Kaw	.. 161
Yaw Chaung River	.. 88
Yawyins ..	173, 195
Yenangyaung	79 to 82
Ying-pan-Kai 175, 176, 179, 194	
Yünnan .. 150, 175, 191, 194	
Yünnanese	.. 176
Yünnan Fu	.. 194
Yusuf-Ku ..	.. 161
Z	
Zanda Muni	.. 243
Zaw Tika ..	.. 211
Zayats ..	.. 10, 93
Zedi ..	.. 54
Zeh-gyo ..	.. 215

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